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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 31 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 31 mai 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

Table of contents

Table of contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears on the outside back cover.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Monday 31 May 1993

The House met at 1332.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS
NATIONAL LAUGHTER DAY
JOURNÉE NATIONALE DU RIRE

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): As you may know, a number of municipalities in the Ottawa-Carleton area have proclaimed June 21 as National Laughter Day, la Journée nationale du rire.

The beneficial effects of laughter are self-evident. From cancer patients to Canadians struggling to cope with life, laughter alleviates pain and dissipates fear, bringing people together and helping them renew their energy.

The founders of humour rooms recently opened in the Ottawa Cancer Lodges have personally witnessed the healing power of laughter and are now asking the government of Ontario and this House to extend the curative benefits of laughter to all Ontarians by declaring June 21 National Laughter Day, la Journée nationale du rire.

Le rire soulage bien des maux, et quand je vois ce que le gouvernement impose à la population de l'Ontario, je me dis que la Journée nationale du rire arrive à point nommé.

As you know, June 21 is the longest day of the year. Let's build on that unique feature and invite Canadians of all backgrounds to enjoy on that day the sunshine and warmth generated by laughter.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I have some very urgent messages for the Premier and the Minister of Finance. These messages are from people of all walks of life from my riding of Mississauga South and from around the province. Here is what the people of Ontario want to tell this NDP government about the budget.

(1) "Please give Bob Rae a message for me: Resign."

(2) "Has Bob Rae ever worked a day in his life? Has he ever met a payroll or does he know what a balance sheet looks like? Tell him from me: It's simple. You just don't spend more money than you have."

(3) "I'm a 40-year member of the NDP and I've worked on every election, but no more, I can tell you."

(4) "My husband just lost his job. I'm the only one working to support our two kids. Why doesn't Bob Rae get real?"

(5) "I'm working at three part-time jobs, I'm trying to pay off my student loans, and the NDP just don't understand that I have no money to pay off their debt too."

(6) "My wife and I are seniors and we are scared about what changes are coming."

That's the end of the quotations, and these are just a few examples of what I've heard from hundreds of angry people.

Premier Rae, please show that you're listening by responding to these messages. Please don't force another \$2 billion worth of tax increases on people who are barely getting by. Please don't kill our economic recovery. We need jobs, not taxes.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): Today is World No-Tobacco Day, a day when the World Health Organization calls on everyone to do their part to reduce smoking. This year, the WHO is asking health care providers in particular to set an example. The theme is "Health Services: Our Window to a Tobacco-Free World."

Last week, the WHO released a report that showed the worldwide death toll in smoking has tripled since the 1960s. It now stands at about three million people per year and it's rising. The death count in Ontario alone is 13,000.

The statistics and health effects around smoking have become better known than they were in the 1960s, but the World Health Organization says smoking risks are in fact greater than we have thought. The organization reports that at least a third, and probably half, of all smokers will die from their habit.

We must reach our young people before they start, and definitely before they become addicted. Every adult who cuts down or stops smoking today or decides to quit permanently sets a good example for our youth. They must see that smoking is not a ticket to adulthood.

I hope that all the members here will join me today in the World No-Tobacco Day as a movement towards a tobacco-free world.

JOB CREATION

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): One year ago, the NDP unveiled its Jobs Ontario Training fund with much fanfare, and while on one hand the NDP has bragged that Jobs Ontario Training has created some 9,000 low-skilled jobs, at the same time the NDP has also killed over 50,000 jobs through the tax increases in its recent budget.

Just what sorts of jobs has the government created through Jobs Ontario? Mike Farnan, the parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for Jobs Ontario Training, said in the Legislature, "It requires employers to make a commitment to hire for the long term." This boast about Jobs Ontario providing long-term jobs has been repeated by the Premier, the Attorney General and

various and sundry NDP members.

But this government has created these primarily low-skilled jobs not for the long term, but for one year only. Despite their statements to the contrary, the NDP's Jobs Ontario Training contract contains no commitment that the jobs last longer than one year. That's right: only one year.

So what's going to happen to those people hired through Jobs Ontario when after only one year they discover that there's no obligation for their employer to continue their jobs? What hope is there for these people the NDP has deluded into believing that they are now off social assistance for good?

Instead of claiming they are providing long-term and highly skilled technical jobs, why doesn't this government come clean and admit that instead of providing a long-term solution, they have only stuck their finger in the dike?

1340

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I direct this statement to the Premier. On Saturday, May 29, I accompanied the Team Harris budget tour into my riding of Lanark-Renfrew. This tour was conducted throughout Ontario, giving people the opportunity to respond directly to the Premier by ballot as to whether they approved or disapproved of his budget.

In our tour through the Country Fair Mall at Smiths Falls and the Mews Mall in Perth, people told us to take a clear message to this government about the budget. Simply stated, their message is this: There are too many tax increases, and jobs will be lost. They told me that they cannot afford new taxes on insurance and auto parts, not to mention the drastic increase in the personal income tax rate.

Small businessmen are telling us that they will have to cut their payrolls because of new measures such as taxes on group benefits, taxes on compensation-protection plans and the reduction of tax deductions.

Those who are employed in the tourism industry say that their business will be impaired by the elimination of the sales tax rebate for tourists. Foresters are infuriated with the increases in the timber licences and in stumpage fees.

It is of little surprise that the people I spoke to are opposed to this budget, because the budget attacked every important sector of the economy in Lanark-Renfrew: personal income tax, small business, tourism and forestry.

CANADIAN FORCES OVERSEAS

Mr David Winninger (London South): Last week, when I was visiting with constituents in my riding of London South, I became aware of the pride that my constituents George and Laverne Henderson take in the accomplishments of their son-in-law, Warrant Officer

J.W. Parsons, who is married to their daughter Kim.

Mr Parsons served with the Canadian Armed Forces for six months in Sarajevo under General Lewis Mackenzie. Mr Parsons was decorated for his service in Yugoslavia.

Mr Parsons, his wife, Kim, and 10-year-old daughter Desiree will be returning June 11 from Baden, Germany, where the family has resided since 1990.

While in Yugoslavia, Mr Parsons was adopted as a hero by the Kensington Nursing Home in London. The kind residents of Kensington Nursing Home sent Mr Parsons care packages on a regular basis, including Kool-Aid to add to the water that had to be boiled in Sarajevo.

My constituents have started a Blue Ribbon campaign in London to honour all of our peacekeepers in Sarajevo.

I share in the pride expressed by George and Laverne Henderson and I am confident that other constituents in my riding and the people of Ontario are grateful for the enormous contribution Warrant Officer Parsons and his colleagues have made as peacekeepers in Yugoslavia. May their influence be as strong as their efforts.

MING PAO NEWSPAPERS

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): Today's economy is characterized by phenomenal bankruptcies, business closures and escalating unemployment. Against this background, I would like to applaud Ming Pao Newspapers (Canada) Ltd for having the courage to establish itself in what appears to be impossible economic times.

Ming Pao is based in Hong Kong and is one of the most influential Chinese dailies in the Asia-Pacific region, with a readership of approximately one million.

Ming Pao newspapers have been sold in Metro for the past two years. However, on Thursday, May 28, 1993, they began printing the Canadian edition at their new plant in Scarborough North. They could have selected no better place. To date, over \$5 million has been invested and over 70 new jobs created. Circulation is presently 15,000. The company aims to increase readership to 20,000 over the next six months.

My sincere congratulations to Mr Kelly Chang, chairman, and Mr Richard Yao, chief executive officer, and all the able-bodied employees there. Congrats.

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): When the Team Harris bus rolled into London and Chatham last week, the residents spoke loudly and clearly: No new taxes; cut government waste; huge deficits and debts are not acceptable; and Ontario needs a prosperity plan to create jobs and renew the economy.

Ontario residents have never been more concerned about keeping their jobs and retraining for new jobs.

Our young people are truly worried about getting jobs. We need their infusion of energy, optimism, integrity, commitment and new ideas.

In our schools, teachers, parents and students are angry that we are experiencing chaos in our social contract negotiations and that the blame is being foisted on local school boards. School boards have been searching for fair solutions to assist the province in finding wage concessions of \$520 million from elementary and secondary school teachers.

Teachers are accusing boards of contract stripping and of blatant attempts to turn back collective bargaining by 20 years. The unions are boycotting social contract meetings—little progress is being made in the social contract negotiations and the final-solution deadline is Friday at 6 pm.

This government has pitted school boards and teachers against each other. The government is demanding a \$520-million cut in this fiscal year. The only way to achieve this goal is by legislating a rollback in salaries, thus avoiding finance and labour relations chaos in our schools.

What this province needs is leadership and good management, and it is clearly missing with this government.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I would like to welcome a group of dedicated people from my constituency who are gathered in the west public gallery watching the proceedings. They have come today to Queen's Park to share with us the benefits of their collaborative effort in creating a Centre scolaire-communautaire.

I became aware of this project two and a half years ago and last fall I met personally with the Minister of Education to discuss how the proposal had progressed and express my full support for it.

Je voudrais aussi souligner combien je trouve important de favoriser les partenariats école-communauté. Dans le cas présent, la communauté francophone de Kingston et les sections de langue française ont fait un énorme travail de collaboration depuis quatre ans.

Together, these three groups from the separate and public school boards and the community have achieved a unique partnership for the construction of the first French-language high school between Cornwall and Oshawa. Such a joint venture will provide the necessary public facilities in the most economical way. It will also create a significant number of jobs and bring lasting economic benefits to the whole community.

In closing, I would like to reiterate my commitment to promoting the full participation of all in Canadian life, and I sincerely believe that a Centre scolaire-communautaire in Kingston will help greatly in achiev-

ing this goal. As Judge Dickson said in March 1990, "Language is more than a mere means of communication; it is part and parcel of the identity and culture of the people speaking it."

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): A 1984 Solicitor General's report, co-authored by the Honourable Howard Hampton, points out that casinos attract increased crime which becomes a threat to both those living in the area and to gambling visitors. It is no coincidence that among US cities, Atlantic City ranks first in crime and Las Vegas third.

The problems with casinos go beyond mere street crime. Organized crime is drawn like a magnet to casinos, which present an opportunity to launder money gained from illicit activities, like the drug trade, without leaving any paper trail. Inspector Barry Hill, director of the Criminal Intelligence Service of Ontario, points out that organized crime has sought to infiltrate every aspect of the casino business, from garbage removal to building maintenance.

The government claims that a casino will bring no more crime than an amusement park, but, to my knowledge, Canada's Wonderland and Disney World have never had the widespread involvement with organized crime that has been documented with casinos in North America.

By putting a casino in Windsor, the government is hoping to reverse the trend of cross-border shopping. In fact, it is sending out an invitation for cross-border crime.

Peel Regional Police Chief Robert Lunney, concerned about Ontario's new organized crime elements, has also said that any casino should be completely government-run with no private partners in order to keep strict control. But the government, with dollar signs in its eyes, is courting a private partner that knows the business, in a business where links with organized crime are widespread and well documented.

To the people of Ontario, and particularly to the people of Windsor, I ask you if a legacy of increased crime opportunities for organized crime is what you wish to leave your children.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I invite all members to join me in welcoming the 13th group of pages to serve in the Third Session of the 35th Parliament: Mathieu Balez, Nickel Belt; Christine Bolan, Nipissing; Kimberley Borden, London North; Darryl Boynton, Dufferin-Peel; Ronald Calixto, Brampton North; Amy Danchuk, Timiskaming; Rebecca Hartley, Oakville South; Bryan Heal, Oakwood; Amanda Hickey, Huron; Lara Housez, St Catharines; Melissa Kinsinger, Norfolk; Tanya Kotowycz, High Park-Swansea; Joshua Lam Jr, Fort York; Timothy Martin, Etobicoke-Lake-

shore; Alexis McDonald, London Centre; Mark Morasut, Etobicoke-Humber; Wendy Nicholson, Guelph; Jennifer Powroz, Nepean; Gregory Svorden, Hamilton Centre; Fraser Telford, York South; Lucas Thacker, Bruce; Michelle Turner, Ottawa South; Ted Wasserman, Willowdale; and Jeff Wright, Oxford.

Please welcome these pages to our assembly.

1350

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I would also like to take this opportunity to invite all members to welcome to our chamber, and indeed to our country, a special visitor who is seated at the table, Mr Mark Swinson, who is a deputy clerk from the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of New South Wales, Australia. Welcome him to Ontario, Canada.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

ENVIRONMENTAL BILL OF RIGHTS

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): A clean environment and green, efficient industry are needed to put Ontarians back to work. This government believes that every individual has a valuable contribution to make in creating a sustainable economy in Ontario. Further, we believe that people must be given the power to make a difference for the environment.

As part of the government's 10-point plan to put Ontarians back to work, today I'm introducing the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights for first reading. This legislation will give Ontarians unprecedented rights to become advocates for the environment. The bill has been written for the public, in the public and by the public. The critics said the bill couldn't satisfy—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member from Oriole, please come to order.

Hon Mr Wildman: The critics said the bill couldn't satisfy the environmentalists and the business community. Some said stronger environmental rights would hinder business; others said that business input would dilute the bill, but they were all wrong.

The bill is a victory for all Ontarians. It will open up the environmental decision-making to greater public scrutiny; it will give greater certainty to business by creating a consistent and predictable process for obtaining environmental approvals; it will give to the public information it needs to get involved; and above all, it will protect the environment to a greater degree than ever before.

While some refining has taken place since the bill was first released for public comment in July 1992, it has remained true to its original principles. The new bill acknowledges the public's right to a healthy environment, provides the public with more opportunities to

participate in environmental decision-making at an early stage, increases government accountability and responsibility for the environment, gives the public enhanced access to the courts and gives greater protection for employees who blow the whistle on polluting employers.

There are many people who deserve credit for making today possible. First, I'd like to recognize my predecessor, Ruth Grier, for her tireless and visionary work to get the bill off the ground.

I'd also like to thank the members of the minister's Task Force on the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights who have joined us today. I'd like to introduce them. They are in the gallery: first, Michael Cochrane, co-chair of the task force and now in private practice; George Howse of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association; Rick Lindgren of the Canadian Environmental Law Association; John Macnamara of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce; Paul Muldoon from Pollution Probe; Andrew Roman, a lawyer specializing in administrative and environmental law; and Sally Marin of the Ministry of Environment and Energy. Also, absent today is Bob Anderson of the Business Council on National Issues. All the members deserve our thanks for their expertise and hard work.

Much work remains, of course. In addition to tabling the bill, we intend to move quickly on its implementation. Today, I am releasing the first draft regulation under the bill. It contains a proposed schedule that affected provincial ministries must follow to meet the requirements of the Environmental Bill of Rights.

The Environmental Bill of Rights is a landmark piece of legislation in Ontario, in Canada and in North America. It meets the needs of the public, industry, environmental groups and government. It is based on a consensus of business representatives and environmental representatives. The consensus is an important building block in the creation of a sustainable economy in Ontario and it will set a new and higher standard for environmental protection, both for now and for years to come in Ontario.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): The minister makes a statement today about the Environmental Bill of Rights. In the next while, we'll be taking a detailed look at the bill and its implications, but at the outset it's clear that there are a number of initial questions and concerns which we have. If time permits, I hope to dwell briefly on four of those areas.

Firstly, it's curious that this statement is made this week, for a couple of reasons. Friday marks the deadline the government has instituted for its social contract talks. The government has said that by Friday municipalities must reduce, no matter what the impact will be on ratepayers; hospitals must reduce; school boards must reduce; the civil service must reduce. Today the government says that it will be creating a new bureau-

crazy, a bureaucracy which is headed by someone called the environment commissioner. At a time when everyone is being told to reduce, the government expands.

But let's take a look at what the environment commissioner can do. Does this person have the power to institute actions on his or her own behalf? The answer is no. Does this person have the power to demand a review? The answer is no. Does this person have the power to take action on behalf of the people of this province? The answer is no.

This commissioner, no matter how well intentioned, has no such power. The office merely forwards letters and requests to the appropriate minister. It doesn't bring people closer to the government; it in fact creates a buffer between government and the people.

Secondly, this week is significant for another matter. Again on Friday, we will mark the first anniversary date for the release of the long-term sites. Thousands of people have voiced their concerns over the process mandated by the government. People have been devastated by the unilateral action taken by this government. People have felt the expansion of landfill sites in their area, mandated and dictated by this government without allowing any public participation.

People have brought forward their objections to the government's Bill 143, which gives the government sweeping unilateral powers: the power of expropriation, the power of inspection without consent of the property owner. Does this bill, does the announcement of the minister today, help those people? The answer is no. The bill does not give those people a voice. In fact, it ensures that people shut out of the process are now locked out of the process.

Thirdly, and briefly, the Environmental Bill of Rights does not, on our reading, give to any individual rights dealing with how their interests have been affected by the government. It creates no new offences and it gives no right to sue for damages.

Fourthly, the Environmental Bill of Rights does not create a single statement for environmental protection that must be followed by each ministry. In fact, there are only 14 ministries that must design or devise their own statement of values for environmental protection, and these statements do not have to be the same. They can be crafted and carved according to each of their wishes. There are valid questions as to what happens when there is a conflict between those values and what happens when those ministries which are not part of the 14 ministries run afoul of some of the applications of the Environmental Bill of Rights.

The statement today does not forward a streamlined process, something which has been called for by many for many years. It in fact ensures possibly a greater confusion. Now each ministry can operate according to its own rules and according to its own values.

In conclusion, I think that when people speak to an Environmental Bill of Rights, they give off a perception, an expectation, that there will be certain rights given to the individuals, to the people of this province; that as a result of this announcement people will have something today that they didn't have yesterday. But this does not fall within the statement by the ministry. There is no increased enforcement power; there are no new legal remedies; there are no new enforcement procedures; there is nothing today that isn't there tomorrow.

In the weeks and months ahead, we will be bringing our questions and concerns forward. Our first priority is the protection of the environment and the involvement of the public, and we will be working to make sure that principle is embraced in that statement.

1400

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I'd like to make a few brief comments to the Minister of Environment and Energy's introduction of the bill of rights. It's a document, of course, that has been long awaited. There have been many introductions of different bills and statements in this place for some time. The former Minister of the Environment, the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, made an introduction some time ago.

I will say it is rather strange that this particular bill, which is certainly going to create a considerable amount of bureaucracy, is being introduced at this time.

Hon Mr Wildman: Fifteen people.

Mr Tilson: You say very few, but we all know exactly that when you are going to have 14 ministries preparing some sort of review for this—I think it's called statement of environmental values—there is going to be a considerable amount of bureaucracy that is going to be required. At a time when the social contract is being negotiated and there are suggestions of a need for cutback in people who work in this place, here we are bringing a whole raft of new bureaucrats into this place.

Hon Mr Wildman: No, wrong.

Mr Tilson: Well, I'll tell you, page 9 of the document that was handed out this morning at your press conference does talk about a request for reviews. It is going to introduce a considerable amount of need for bureaucrats and legal people to implement this whole process. I don't know who's going to advise people in this whole matter.

The question of course is, can the ministry handle all these things now? The enforcement branch of the Ministry of Environment is having a great deal of difficulty at this point in investigating violations.

Hon Mr Wildman: No. It's a lot of work, but they thrive on it.

Mr Tilson: You say no. That isn't what they say. They're having a lot of trouble investigating violations, and now you're going to give them even more work to

do. It's going to create a great deal of difficulty.

You did boast about the consultation in this process, and there appears to have been some sort of consultation throughout. I understand that there were only 200 interest groups that responded to your paper that was put out, which is rather low, disappointingly low.

Interjection.

Mr Tilson: Well, I'll tell you, for a population of this province that's a rather low number that have commented. I understand that those comments won't be released until after second reading of the bill.

It is too bad that a similar consensus wasn't put forward as what you did with Bill 40, because Bill 40 did not have nearly the consensus—the disastrous effects of Bill 40. There is no mention of the Ministry of Education participating within the 14 ministries that are going to be submitting the statement of environmental values. In the first year these ministries must give a statement of environment value. That, sir, is going to create a great deal of bureaucracy and time, at a time when you're trying to cut back throughout this whole process.

The environmental commissioner is an interesting development. That's going to be yet a new watchdog for the province of Ontario, notwithstanding that we have the Ombudsman, although there's been some criticism of the Ombudsman in this place, particularly by members of the government. Yet, now we're going to have a new watchdog who will have no say whatsoever over such august groups as Ontario Hydro and with respect to the Interim Waste Authority, which has been criticized over and over, particularly in the three regions, as an absolutely dictatorial arm of your government. Yet the environmental commissioner will have no say with respect to those groups.

As I understand it, the environmental commissioner will be responding directly to this House. In other words, once a year there will be a report made to this House. I would submit, Mr Minister, that it should more appropriately be made to your ministry where we can monitor from time to time exactly what the environmental commissioner is doing.

There is one other criticism that I would like to refer to, looking at this group of advisers. As I understand it, there was no representation from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture in the whole process of advising from the agricultural community, and there is some concern, Mr Minister, which I trust you will confirm at some other time, that the bill of rights will not override the Farm Practices Protection Act, which the people in the agricultural community are most concerned about.

The electronic registry which is being suggested, now that is an interesting concept. I raise the question as to what sort of access the public will have to that electronic registry. As I understand, when information is to

be fed to the various computers, it will only be there for 30 days and then it's zapped. It's just gone, and that is a major defect. You're going to have to have people sitting in these registry offices continually or they will have no idea what's going on. So I would suggest that you have a second look at that whole computerization that you're looking at.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TAX INCREASES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My first question is to the Premier. May I suggest to you that it is absolutely bizarre to hear Ontario's Minister of Finance talking today about the hollow victory, when you fight the deficit at the expense of jobs. It is bizarre, because that's exactly what you've done with the budget that you presented more than a week ago.

Premier, your budget is taking absolutely the wrong direction. The new tax increases in that budget will kill the fragile economic recovery that all of us are hoping to see take place here, and I ask when you will understand what your government has done time and time again, to damage business and to destroy jobs. In the week before this House broke, we asked the Minister of Finance what impact the new tax measures would have on the economy and most specifically on jobs, and we received no answer at that time. So I ask, will you please explain what kind of economic growth and job creation you expect to achieve with your \$2-billion tax grab?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Let me say to the honourable leader of the Liberal Party that I look forward to seeing her correspondence with the leader of the Liberal Party in the province of Quebec, I look forward to seeing her correspondence with the leader of the Liberal Party in New Brunswick, which are leading Liberal governments next to ours—the economy of Quebec very closely allied and tied to ours—where her party is in government. Their tax increases obviously required, in their view and by virtue of the size of the overall public sector problems they are facing, the approaches they've taken to the economy, in many ways even tougher than ours.

But I would say to the honourable member that where we differ from the government of Quebec, for example, is that we're investing \$4 billion in new investment, in public sector investment in this province, which is more than any other government and, secondly, it's far more than is the case in other jurisdictions. So I would say to the honourable member that when she talks about the approach we're taking, perhaps she would put it in some perspective. Our capital budgets are larger than before. They're intended to deal with a problem. They're intended to provide a long-term view in terms of investment in the province.

The message that I'm getting loud and clear from people who are investing in the economy is that they

appreciate the signal we've sent with respect to the deficit. They think it's a sound signal. They think it's a wise signal.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: And they also believe that it's time to start bringing down interest rates, which is the message that we think we're sending to the Bank of Canada and that other governments are sending to the Bank of Canada. I believe this is the soundest approach for us to take with respect to jobs. This is the best approach to jobs.

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: If you ignore the deficit, you kill jobs. If you ignore the need for sound public investment, you don't do enough for jobs.

The Speaker: Would the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: We're doing something for jobs, and I would say to her, just have a look at what other governments are having to do across the country.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, if you deal with the deficit by raising taxes, you kill jobs. If you try and deal with the deficit without dealing with the need to get people back to work, you are not going to solve your deficit problem. We keep saying, "Understand how the two things work together," and please don't keep telling us about the \$4 billion in investment. You've told us about that now for three successive budgets and it doesn't give a whole lot of hope to the 575,000 people who are still out of work in this province.

I actually expected you to tell us a little bit about the Treasurer's concern with the federal government's fiscal policies and the Bank of Canada's interest rates. We are prepared to acknowledge that is a part of the problem, but we also want to urge you to understand that you have to do your part, that it's not enough for you and the Finance minister to lecture others and that it's not enough for you to talk about Quebec and about Newfoundland. You've got to understand how your policies, time and time again, are putting more and more people out of work.

1410

Premier, how can you possibly lecture others about the need for job creation when your budget's \$2-billion tax grab is quite simply going to put 50,000 more Ontarians out of work?

Hon Mr Rae: Well, it's really quite interesting. I listened to the honourable member. First of all, I find it really kind of remarkable that the leader of the Liberal Party in this province would completely ignore what her sister party in the province right next door is having to do. She would just disregard that as if that's not of any import, of any relevance.

Have you even picked up the phone to talk to Premier Bourassa and said to him, "Why are you raising taxes in this current economic climate?" Have you picked up the phone and talked to Premier McKenna and said, "Why are you doing this?" I suspect that the answer the honourable member would get is that any mature, sensible policy—why is President Clinton doing it in the United States? Why is he carrying out this measure as well? Has he gone off his rocker as well? Is everyone else out of step except the Liberal Party of Ontario, which is saying one thing in opposition and doing another thing when it's in government?

I think it's time that the leader of the Liberal Party recognized the fact that there is a serious problem in the economy. It has to be dealt with in a serious way. It is going to be conducive to jobs. We are going to produce a better recovery. A recovery that ignores the deficit simply isn't going to be as long-lasting as a recovery which deals with the deficit and which deals with problems which her government did nothing to deal with for the five years it was in office.

Mrs McLeod: It's tempting for me not to pursue the question when the Premier, who once was an opposition leader, talks about people saying one thing in opposition and something else when they're the government. It really is difficult to keep a focus on what is in fact a very serious question, and the reason this is a serious question is because it is a serious issue for the people of this province.

The government conveniently brought in its budget just before a week that's known as constituency week, and I will say quite honestly, Premier, that no, I didn't call the Premier of Quebec and no, I didn't call the Premier of Newfoundland. I talked to people in communities in Ontario. I talked to municipal leaders, I talked to people who are providing health care, I talked to small business people, I talked to people in the tourism industry and I talked to people in the high-tech industries, and all of them agreed that the budget you presented, with its \$2 billion in tax increases, is going to destroy more jobs.

Premier, it is time to stop paying lipservice on Monday morning to the importance of job creation and economic recovery when your budget's damage has already been done. If jobs are your priority, I ask you why you brought in a budget with \$2 billion in new tax increases. When will you learn that new taxes are not going to solve this deficit problem in this province; they're going to make it worse? When will you listen? When will you listen to what the people of this province are telling you, "Scrap your new taxes"?

Hon Mr Rae: This from a government which raised taxes consistently throughout its time in office. I find it a little hard to take.

We've all spent time in our constituencies and we can all compare the messages that we've received. I would

say to the honourable member that the sense I have from the people of this province is that they recognize there are difficult, real decisions that have to be made. They recognize that these decisions have been to some extent put off. They've been put off in this province; they've been put off by other governments in other places.

We are a government that has decided to tackle these problems in a fairminded way and in an effective way, in a way that asks that yes, there are going to be higher taxes for those who are in a position to pay them, and at the same time says that's going to allow us as a government, first of all, to keep our operating costs firmly under control, which we're already doing through the other measures that we're taking, and second of all, that will allow us to invest more in the future: a billion dollars in training, a program you want to eliminate, and \$4 billion in terms of capital works and investment in the future, which we think is going to make a difference.

I would say to the honourable member that she can dismiss the experience of other governments all she wants, but it really does defy analysis to somehow think that the Liberal Party in opposition in Ontario has got an answer that no other government across the country has somehow been able to take up as its call to action recently. Every government in this country is recognizing the need to face the future in a balanced way, in an effective way and in a way that deals with current problems, and the Liberal Party in Ontario seems to be immune to that outbreak of common sense which is taking place across the country.

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I say to the Premier, in addressing my second question to him, that the simple reality is that his government is continuing simply to react in a panic fashion to a financial crisis which his government solely has created. I would suggest to the Premier that the budget has made any real progress in that other area of complete chaos and confusion, the social contract talks, that much more difficult.

The deadline for the completion of the social contract talks is literally days away. Last week, we saw two unions and an employer group walk away from the table, CUPE is now threatening to boycott the remainder of the talks, Fred Upshaw of OPSEU is warning civil servants to be prepared for a general strike to save jobs, and last week your Finance minister admitted to the Hamilton Spectator, and I quote, "If on June 4 things fall apart and everybody walks off in a huff, then we're going to have to do some scrambling."

Premier, all you have been doing from the beginning is scrambling. You obviously have no idea what to do. You have no plan. You are still lurching from crisis to crisis. I ask, how are you going to deal with the pande-

monium that is being created by your disastrous social contract talks?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I can tell the honourable member that we know full well that we presented the one million people who work in the public sector and their representatives with some difficult choices, and we understand full well that what we have asked people to do really doesn't have a lot of precedent to it in terms of this province or indeed other jurisdictions.

We happen to think that it's fairer to people to say: "Look, we do feel, and as a government have reached the decision, that we do need to take \$2 billion out of the size of the public sector payroll. We would like very much to discuss with you the ways in which that can be done."

I'm not surprised, and I don't think anybody should be surprised, that there'd be a lot of resistance (a) to the idea of \$2 billion coming out, and secondly, that there'd be a lot of resistance, to say, "Well no, we don't want to have to participate in this." But our view as a government is, and my view remains, that it's always fairer to ask people to participate and to have some kind of a say in these decisions than it is to simply impose a solution. I think it's a fairer way. I think it's a better way.

The honourable member can say that she now agrees with her good friend Sid Ryan and her good friend Fred Upshaw and all the others who are long-time supporters of hers, or she can say that she supports the employers, the odd one who says, "We don't want to participate in these discussions." That's up to her.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: All I can tell her is that I think the way we're proceeding is fairer, and as for what will happen on Friday, we will have to see, but obviously the government is prepared for whatever happens.

1420

Mrs McLeod: Premier, there is absolutely no one who has been affected by this whole series of last-minute crisis responses on the part of your government who feels that any of this is leading towards something that we might call fair.

In that same interview with the Hamilton Spectator last week, your Finance minister said that if the social contract talks fall apart, his preference would be to simply cut more from schools and hospitals and municipalities and colleges and universities. You will be aware that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario has already condemned your government for placing most of the burden for your deficit reduction on municipalities and school boards and hospitals and colleges and universities.

If we've calculated correctly, and we believe we have, for every dollar your government contributes to deficit reduction, it is asking municipalities and hospi-

tals and school boards and taxpayers to contribute \$8. I ask, Premier, is this what you call sharing the pain? Have you any idea how health and education and firefighting and policing across this province will be affected by the sheer accumulation of the pain that you are sharing?

Hon Mr Rae: I would say—

Interjection: Here comes the answer from Ross McClellan.

Hon Mr Rae: No, it's not from Ross McClellan. I would say, with the greatest of respect to the honourable member, that there is a need in the province, I think, and a growing recognition in the province, of the need for a sense of reality about what we're all facing here. Yes, we are asking our transfer partners, to whom we transfer tens of billions of dollars, to whom the vast majority of the provincial budget is transferred, to participate with us in this process.

I say to the honourable member that it's inconceivable that you could have a successful deficit-cutting strategy that did not deal with the transfer partners of the government. There is no serious strategy—again, look at Quebec, look at New Brunswick, look at anywhere else around the country. If you don't have a strategy that deals with that, you just aren't going to face up to the problem.

I heard the honourable member on the radio the other day saying that the Liberals had a solution. They would deal with it by cutting back on administration, which we have done far more than they have ever done, and she said, "But we would do it all without affecting anybody and without causing any discomfort or any pain." That's how the Liberals would deal with it.

Well, as long as that's the cloud-cuckoo-land the Liberal Party of Ontario lives in, I wish them well. Unfortunately, it's not the serious world of fiscal reality that those of us who are in government have to deal with, and in her heart of hearts the Leader of the Opposition knows that full well, which is why it's so difficult to take her questions seriously today.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, I think there is a sense of reality in communities across this province. The people I've spent the last week talking to understand that there is a serious financial problem in this province, a problem which you have allowed to get beyond all bounds that any of us could ever have imagined seeing. People realize, as we do, that there have to be steps taken to deal with the financial problem.

But in addition to that sense of reality, I can tell you that there is a sense of anxiety, a sense of anger, of helplessness, of hopelessness, because people simply have no idea what you're going to do next. Your social contract talks are causing a degree of confusion because this whole process has been flawed from the very beginning, and you are throwing this whole province

into total chaos. There have been eight wasted weeks, and Premier, I would tell you that all we have seen for those eight weeks is a level of confusion and confrontation such as we have never seen in this province before.

I ask you, Premier, what are your alternatives, your plan, your alternatives if the social contract talks break down on June 4? What responsibility will you take, as Premier of this province, to ensure that yes, your budget requirements can be met, but that they can be met without throwing thousands more people out of work and without slashing vital services to the people of this province to a point where the pain is simply not tolerable?

Hon Mr Rae: It's precisely because we don't want to slash services that we believe in the social contract talks as an alternative to that. It's precisely because we want people to have some kind of say in their future that we are launching the social contract talks.

I would say to the honourable member that I've listened carefully to what I think would be a realistic alternative to the size and dimensions of the problems we face in the province, and I listened carefully to the leader of the Liberal Party, and I really just don't think that what is being put forward by the Liberal Party comes even close to being a serious alternative to what this government is trying to do—not even close.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is as well to the Premier. Premier, in the gallery today is a Miss Cindy Timleck. She has written a letter to your Treasurer, a copy to me, which I thought you might have had earlier, and I apologize if they didn't pick it up earlier. I sent it over to the Premier at the start of question period.

Miss Timleck is in the gallery. I would ask her to stand up and say hello.

She is typical of Ontarians that we met, our caucus colleagues and myself, as we travelled this province. She wrote in her letter how your budget affects her, and quite simply, Premier, Miss Timleck says that your latest tax grab, on top of years of federal and provincial and municipal tax increases—I think the timing of it, the cumulative effect, when I chatted with her, as well is a significant part of it—your tax hike, on top of that has taken a toll on her. She can no longer afford to live and spend as she has because too much of her hard-earned income will be going into your, the government's, pocket instead of hers.

Premier, I've shared her letter with you. What do you have to say today to Miss Timleck?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I've just had a chance today, just now, to have a look at Miss Timleck's letter and I really am not entirely familiar with all of her circumstances, so all I can say to her, through you, Mr Speaker, and through the leader of the third party, is

that we are trying to deal with a difficult financial situation in as fair a way as we possibly can.

As a family person, I can say that I don't think it's wise for us to pass on to the next generation an enormous, colossal deficit, and I know that the leader of the third party doesn't think so either. So perhaps it's wiser for us to start tackling that problem now, as the economy's in some recovery, than to put that off for another day.

We're asking public servants to give up a great deal in terms of the overall situation. We don't think we're asking them to give up too much, but we're asking them to give up something in terms of the long term. We're asking taxpayers to contribute and we're cutting back substantially on government expenditures to deal with a problem which has taken a while to accumulate, but which we now feel is serious enough for us to tackle together.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: I would look forward to the opportunity of talking to Miss Timleck about what we're doing and what the alternatives are, but I think when we look at the alternatives, people will recognize, and I hope that she does as well, that Ontario is still a pretty good place to live, it's a good place to raise your family and it's a good place to look to the future. That's the view that I have as a parent and as somebody who looks to the future. There's nowhere else that I can think a better place to raise one's family and to look to the future.

Mr Harris: I thought that "Give us a place to stand and a place to grow" was going to be sung in the background and hummed as the Premier spoke about "Preserve and conserve it."

Premier, Miss Timleck's disposable income, I think she wants you to know—I was very struck when I received a copy of her letter to the Treasurer, which is why my staff called her and asked if she'd be willing to share her letter with more than just the Treasurer and myself—I think she wants you to know that this extra tax grab doesn't just hurt her; it hurts the local car dealership. She'll not be buying the new car that she was looking at. It hurts the small business people who own restaurants in her neighbourhood because she will think twice about spending money to eat out. It hurts the local small contractors who've been struggling to stay in business because she has made a decision now to put off doing repairs and improvements to her home.

It hurts any investment opportunity that she and millions of Ontarians like her, if they did manage to save five cents, may have made in this province, because instead of the private sector getting that money or it being invested, it's going to Bob Rae. It's going to government.

I would ask you this, Premier: Can you explain to me

and to Miss Timleck how your tax hikes and the money going to government is possibly—given the abysmal record over 10 years of Conservative and Liberal and NDP governments at taxing money and saying we're going to create jobs, how can you possibly think that you now have a magic formula that you can create more jobs than Miss Timleck can herself, and millions of Ontarians, spending that money in the marketplace? Can you explain that?

Hon Mr Rae: When I was leader of the third party I'd often talk about examples and people, and I'd appreciate very much, and I'm sure people will appreciate, an opportunity to discuss with Miss Timleck again in terms of the situation. I certainly would appreciate that opportunity as well. But I would say to you, sir, and I'd say to her, that we can't ignore the deficit issue. We can't ignore the fact that we have a provincial debt. We can't ignore the need to protect services. We can't ignore the need to provide good education, to provide the best possible health care that we can, all of which services have to be paid for.

1430

We have found, I think as every other economy has found, that if she was living in Quebec she'd be facing the same situation. If she was living in New Brunswick she'd be facing the same situation. In fact, in both those places she'd be paying more. She'd be paying more in taxes. She chose to live in Ontario, which I think—I don't know, I haven't asked her, but I still think it's the best place to be; I really do. I think that when you compare our services and you compare our tax levels with anywhere else in the world, I'd rather have the balance that we have here to having a balance that's found in other places.

I say to the honourable member, I don't pretend to have a magic solution. What we do have is an approach which we think is fair and, above all, is realistic given the very tough times which we're all facing.

The Speaker: Final supplementary.

Mr Harris: The Premier is right that I share his view that the deficit must be dealt with. So does Miss Timleck. So do the people we met when we travelled this province. They want the deficit to be dealt with.

But Premier, they also want to see the private sector and the marketplace flourishing. One of the scary things we found out in the ballots that are coming back and in the letters and the people we talked to is that the only growth that many Ontarians believe is going to come as a result of your budget is a growth in the underground economy, and that, Premier, will not generate revenues for Floyd Laughren.

The only way—we have pointed out to you, businesses have pointed out to you, and I think even your union social contract partners have pointed out to you—to generate more in tax revenue is to have more

taxpayers. If you want more in sales tax, I think you're going to have to have more sales. You're going to have to have more consumer spending. If you want more in income taxes, you're going to have to have more people earning more money. Your budget is thwarting that. It is penalizing, once again, the marketplace and the private sector from being able to do that.

I would ask you this, Premier, given that I've not seen any evidence that government spending creates more jobs than private sector spending. I've analysed all 10 provinces and the federal government—Conservative, Liberal, NDP governments. It just doesn't work. I think you would acknowledge that after your deficit of a couple years ago. I would ask you this: that if we and your partners and those Ontarians can come up with \$2 billion of spending that can be cut, of waste, of programs that they can prioritize, will you agree to cut your tax hike of \$2 billion and proceed that way instead of by the tax hike way?

Hon Mr Rae: I've been able to get a hold of—I think he sent it over to me—the Team Harris New Directions for Ontario report to the Minister of Finance, which is a result of the tour that the member was on. I followed it with a great deal of interest throughout the week. I noticed with interest—and I don't know whether the leader is going to take the supplementary or whether someone else is—that his proposals are eliminating health card fraud, which would save \$675 million.

I don't know anybody who—

Mr Harris: That is according to the auditor.

Hon Mr Rae: No, it's not the auditor. I don't know anybody who comes up with that number. Stopping welfare mismanagement and fraud, \$620 million. Again, I don't know the source of that number. And then the combination of getting out of housing and getting out of child care—no more government affordable housing programs and no more government child care programs. All of those New Democrats out there who say they don't know the difference between a Tory and a New Democrat: I do. I do, and that's the difference.

The Tories say they don't want to have an affordable housing program in the province of Ontario and the Tories say they don't want to have any public child care programs. I do. I want to have public affordable housing programs. I want to have public child care programs because that's the kind of province that I want to live in.

Mr Harris: I guess it was your own government OHIP personnel who said \$671 million.

However, Mr Premier—by way of a new question, Mr Speaker, again to the Premier. The Premier may think that the partisan record for the campaign trail of whether our plans, our government housing plans to help people directly, which will help many more people afford housing than your plan will—you can argue your

plans better than ours. You can argue that our plan to give money directly to those who need day care, which we say will help many more single parents, you can argue that yours is better—the record shows they're not—but don't sit and stand in this place and lecture about who plans to help single mothers, who plans to put more affordable housing available for people than the proposals that we've given you, because I'll stand our record against yours any day.

Miss Timleck's plight is typical of many Ontarians. This is what they've told us as we've travelled this province, what they're phoning in, what they're writing all over. I had sent over a report from the past week to the Premier, which he has already referenced. In Agincourt we heard from a Peter Lintern, "What we need is a government that reduces expenditure and industry that increases revenues, not vice versa, as now." Premier, this is what we heard in over 25 communities that we visited.

I say to you again, if we and your partners and the unions, which say just stopping the year-end spending will save you \$2 billion—

The Speaker: Will the leader place a question, please.

Mr Harris: If we can give you \$2 billion in spending cuts, will you agree to scrap the \$2 billion in tax hikes and deal with the spending cuts instead?

Hon Mr Rae: I've listed the ones that are apparently in part of the report, and I've only skimmed the report, but I think I've got the thrust of it. I would say to the member, the key of it—sort of the key bottom line, of course, is the ballot, and I want members to hear the neutral language of the ballot which is being put forward as a serious non-partisan exercise in the public interest by the Tory party of Canada. Here's the choice which the non-political, non-partisan, objective rhetoric of the Conservative Party has produced:

"Vote on the Budget.

"After eight years of tax increases in Ontario," which, by the way, includes a substantial period—nothing happened before 1985. There were no tax increases before 1985. I didn't know that. Now I know that. I hadn't known that. I didn't realize that Frank Miller hadn't raised taxes. I didn't realize that Larry Grossman didn't raise taxes. I didn't realize that those folks didn't raise taxes.

The choice is this: There are two ways you can vote, and I apologize to my Liberal Party colleagues in the House. For some reason they have been omitted from the ballot. I don't know why that is. They may want to complain—

The Speaker: Will the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: I don't know whether they're being lumped in with us or whether they're being lumped in with them.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: "I agree with: Mike Harris that Ontario needs a 1993 provincial budget with no tax increases"—it's a miracle—cuts in government waste "and a prosperity plan to create jobs and renew the economy."

The Speaker: Will the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: Or, "I agree with: Bob Rae that Ontario needs a 1993 provincial budget with \$2 billion in tax hikes and a \$10 billion deficit."

Well, I want equal time on the ballot to put a case on behalf of the people of the province that puts things in a little less squirrelly a manner than they've been put forward by the—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Supplementary.

Mr Harris: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Premier, if you have another ballot question to ask people, we'd be happy to go to the people right now with a real ballot.

Premier, the real question is this: We have told taxpayers—I mean, unlike the Liberals, who say, "Spend more, don't cut and don't hike taxes," we've said there are no easy choices. We've said there are no easy choices. It will be tough. There is some spending to be cut. And our choice is saying, "We're going to have to cut spending if we're not going to hike taxes because we want to deal with the deficit."

So, Premier, the real question is this: If Ontarians, from whatever source, even from the opposition benches, including the union members, the social contract talks, can come up with \$2 billion in spending cuts—I think your tax hikes, you said, are over a three-year period. That's how much you plan to hike taxes for the next three years. You want to end your three-year program \$2 billion less in spending. If we can come up with another \$2 billion in spending cuts, will you agree to repeal the tax hikes? Hit the deficit targets with \$2 billion less in spending: That's the question. Will you agree to that?

1440

Hon Mr Rae: Again, I never believe in answering hypothetical questions. All I would say to the honourable member is this: Obviously any practical suggestions from him or from others will be taken extremely seriously. If he's now alleging that there's \$675 million in health card fraud, if he thinks that's the amount that's out there—

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): Ask your staff to verify it.

Hon Mr Rae: No, he says these are our numbers. These are the numbers which the member has put

forward. These are in the Tory party document which he's putting forward. If he expects that to be taken seriously, if he thinks that's the serious number and the serious proposal that's being put forward, I would say to him, of course we will look at any serious proposals. But I look at the proposals that are out there and I question them.

We're not going to cancel the housing programs of the government and we're not going to cancel the child care programs of the government. Those are things we are not going to do. We're not going to do them because we believe strongly that they make sense for Ontarians, that they will provide good services for Ontarians, decent shelter for Ontarians, and that these are programs that are in the public interest. I don't intend to see those programs savaged and slashed and burned by Tory cuts.

Mr Harris: I ask the Premier, if he doesn't like where we would like to cut out \$2 billion in spending, I'm asking if he'll accept it from the social contract partners, from the unions which have offered you \$2 billion in cuts, from many others. You don't have to take them just from me.

But, Premier, let me, by way of final supplementary on this question, ask you this: You've talked about how you've cut back. If you have a copy of your budget with you—perhaps you've got it memorized if you don't, pages 92-93—when we add your operating spending and your capital spending, it comes to \$55.948 billion. Last year it was \$53.789 billion. That's \$2 billion more spending than last year.

Now, the only cuts we see in here are \$2 billion cut from the public sector employees of this province. They're going to pony up \$2 billion. Taxpayers are going to pony up \$2 billion; we know that's in here. But we see increases in your spending.

Premier, do you think it's fair—you and the Treasurer kept saying it's fair—that taxpayers are going to come to the table with \$2 billion? Do you think it's fair that the unionized and the non-unionized civil servants, the men and women, the almost a million of this province, the brothers and sisters whom I seem to be the only one fighting for, have to pony up \$2 billion—

The Speaker: Order. Would the leader place his question, please.

Mr Harris: Do you think that's fair, that \$4 billion, when your spending is up \$2 billion itself? Do you think that's fair?

Hon Mr Rae: I could be wrong, but I seem to recall that the same person who's now saying that he's opposed to what we're doing at the social contract table, the same person who's saying that, the same person who's standing up now saying he's opposed to this, was the same person who just a couple—I was asking my colleagues, I said, "Wasn't that the guy"—maybe it was

a long-lost twin brother; I don't know. But I thought it was the same fellow who stood up and said, "Bang, bang, bang." That's what he was going to do to the public sector of the province: "Bang, bang, bang."

I would say to the honourable member, we think the approach we're taking is fair. No government since the Second World War has done more to control program spending than this government. That is a fact. No government has done more. No government of which you were ever a member, no government which you ever supported, no government which you ever voted for, no government which you ever campaigned for—

The Speaker: Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —has done more than the New Democratic Party government this year to control program spending in the province of Ontario. That is the truth.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): My question is to the Premier.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mrs Caplan: I had an opportunity to speak with my constituents, travelling the province over the last week. People are angry.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Oriole.

Mrs Caplan: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My constituents and taxpayers in this province are angry. They're cynical as a result of a disastrous budget that's asking them to pay \$2 billion more. But what they're particularly angry and frustrated about is the waste of government expenditure, and over the last week I don't think there was an example that better said how you're wasting money than this insert in the newspapers that went out—self-serving, partisan, political advertising.

The taxpayers of this province want you to stand in your place and tell them how you can waste their money. How can you ask taxpayers to pay \$2 billion more in taxes and then waste their tax dollars on this kind of partisan, political advertising?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I would say to the honourable member that at a cost of under 10 cents a copy, we have distributed it and it is a concise, factual, easy-to-read summary of the budget and has information in it which is very direct about the tax increases, information that's very direct about what the government is doing, about what the increases have been, where the cuts are coming—a very straightforward proposal at a cost of just under \$300,000.

I think it's a fair and useful expenditure of public funds to allow the public to see that kind of information and to make that kind of information available.

I might say, when I hear a member of the Liberal Party talking about government advertising, I have a slightly hard time.

Mrs Caplan: This document was produced at taxpayers' expense by the government of Ontario. It is blatantly partisan; it is blatant political advertising. It has done more to make taxpayers angry, frustrated and upset.

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member for Chatham-Kent, please come to order.

Mrs Caplan: They are fearful about their jobs. They know the aspect of your tax increases that's going to hurt the economic recovery. They know that this budget is taking money directly out of their pockets and they say you that you must stop this self-serving, partisan advertising and the kind of wastefulness which is making them angrier and angrier every day.

Premier, I ask you, will you stand in your place today and tell the public of Ontario, and promise my constituents in the riding of Oriole, that they will not see any more of this and that you will apologize for this blatant, partisan piece of advertising and apologize to them?

Hon Mr Rae: I think a factual, accessible piece of information about the budget makes perfectly good sense.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: It makes perfectly good sense for governments to do this. It's the sort of thing that every municipal government does. It's the sort of thing that every board of education does. The public has a right to know. It's no more a partisan document than the budget speech or the thick budget document which is provided to the banks and to everybody else as a matter of course.

We don't think the budget is something that should only go to the banks and the big corporations, to the lawyers and the chartered accountants, paid for by the taxpayers. We think taxpayers are entitled to see where their money is going and how their money's being raised. We think all the taxpayers are entitled to that, not just the banks and the friends of the Liberal Party and not just the big accountancy firms. That's what we think.

1450

HEALTH CARDS

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): My question is to the Minister of Health. Recently, a three-year-old child was turned away from the emergency department of a hospital in my riding because his mother could not find the little boy's health card right away. This unfortunate incident occurred in spite of the fact that Jonathon Bastien was born in that hospital and has been there on at least three occasions for treatment.

Today's Toronto Star says: "But when his mother, Tammy, rushed him to the emergency ward May 13, she said she was told to show officials the card immediately or pay about \$80. She didn't have the cash.

"She took her son home and gave him painkillers."

It notes that the nearest hospital is about 60 kilometres away, in Barrie.

Minister, because of your government's mismanagement of the health card crisis, thousands of OHIP billings have been rejected by your ministry and doctors and hospitals have become so paranoid over this point that it's beginning to affect the way they deliver health care services in this province. What steps have you taken to ensure that residents of Ontario won't be turned away at the emergency room door like three-year-old Jonathon Bastien was?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm disappointed in the conclusion that the member draws in his question from what I'm sure he agrees with me is an absolutely shocking event in Collingwood hospital. Nobody in this province can be denied emergency help because they haven't brought their health card with them. I understand the hospital has admitted that it made a mistake. It's certainly a mistake that I hope will never happen again.

Mr Jim Wilson: Surely somebody could have treated little Jonathon while they were looking for his valid health card number.

Just to take a look at how you've not responded to the health card crisis, your deputy minister told me earlier this year, during committee hearings, that a toll-free telephone line would be set up by mid-March to ensure that doctors and hospitals could verify OHIP card numbers. It's now the end of May and no such telephone line exists.

Thousands of non-residents are abusing our health care system. Your own unions, in their social contract documents, estimate that there's some \$700 million in health card abuse going on in this province at this time, and you've done nothing to correct this problem.

Now we have an American-style "cash up front or no service" health care system in Ontario. Would you agree with me and with the Bastien family in Collingwood—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Sarnia.

Mr Jim Wilson: —that medicare has sure deteriorated since the time when the Ontario PC Party guaranteed universal access to quality health care in this province?

Hon Mrs Grier: The maintenance of accessibility of health care, of the quality of health care and of the affordability of health care are the primary principles that this government is engaged in ensuring are maintained for the sake of the people of Ontario. For the

member to draw the conclusion that because a very dangerous and tragic mistake was made by a hospital, a mistake that I deplore and that I'm sure he deplores—all of the partners within our health care system are moving towards denial of health care is absolutely an extravagant exaggeration.

He, I'm sure, recalls the exchange that I had in this House with the leader of the third party, who I think himself admitted that the extent of the fraud in health cards was about \$20 million—too much, but certainly not the kinds of numbers the member is throwing around. It is the responsibility of all of us, physicians, hospitals and consumers, to make sure that health cards are up to date. That does not mean that anyone ought to be denied emergency care in the absence of a health card.

FAMILY SUPPORT PAYMENTS

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): My question is for the Attorney General. Madam Minister, my office has been inundated with calls from constituents who are involved with the family support plan. It appears there are several problems with this system, especially when it concerns the length of time between when support is deducted from the paycheque and when it is finally processed at the family support plan office and forwarded to the recipient. The time delay leaves the payer in arrears, and once in arrears the payer is subject to a 50% wage deduction and seizure of any federal government funds to which he or she may be entitled.

As you can appreciate, Mr Speaker—and I know the minister can as well—many of these payers who are making the payments on a regular basis, in good faith, are extremely frustrated and angry that they find themselves in this position. The payer faces serious financial difficulties as a result of this bureaucratic delay and women and children are left without the support they often so desperately need.

Madam Minister, what is being done to speed up the processing of these support deduction orders?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I agree with the member that the goal of a 48-hour turnaround on these payments is very important for people, and it's very important for us to try to keep to it. She is right: We are not able to meet that goal in some of our busier offices some of the time, particularly at the peak times of the month, the 1st and the 15th, when it will sometimes take three to four days. We have extra difficulties when the source of the funds is not an employer but may be the federal government, in terms of income tax returns and so on, because that's also a jurisdictional issue.

What we are going to do is first of all initiate an electronic funds transfer, which will electronically allow employers to transfer the funds and allow us to transfer those funds to the recipient. That should speed up that

process. In order to do that, we have to upgrade our computer system. We're in the process of doing that and perfecting the design to try to improve the service.

Ms Haeck: I appreciate the comments the minister has made. I do want to bring to her attention that a significant number of my constituents in St Catharines are employed by General Motors, and many of these GM workers are involved with the family support plan and have found themselves facing two-week delays in remitting time, of their payments, from the GM head office in Oshawa to the family support plan due to an unwieldy payroll deduction process. GM workers have enough to worry about in my community without having the burden of this seemingly inefficient system hanging over their heads.

With so many family support plan payers employed by General Motors—and I'm sure that many other large corporations in Ontario are in a similar situation—will your ministry consider improvements to the remitting process to provide for a direct link between the family support plan office and the corporation so that important support payments are not simply subject to the inevitable delays of the mailing system?

Hon Mrs Boyd: Certainly, that is something we are in fact involved in. There is an employer representative group that's working with us to try to improve those processes. That obviously is going to be very important with large employers; it won't help us with smaller employers. But we think, particularly given the growth in technological ability to do that kind of work and to do it in quick batches that really lower the amount of time it takes, we can do that.

I should say we're getting good support from employers. Employers are taking this very seriously, and we're finding that our working relationship with employers is improving all the time.

1500

HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): My question is to the Minister of Health. I listened very carefully to her response to the member for Simcoe West, when she was discussing the quality and affordability of the health care system. Over the past few weeks we've seen a major assault on our medicare system. The decisions this government has made are all the worse because they are unplanned. There's no analysis of the effects of their erratic pronouncements on people who need health and medical care services.

Today, I learned that the social contract talks in the health care sector have been disbanded because the chairman of that division indicated that the talks are in disarray. Furthermore, today the leadership of the Ontario Medical Association has filed a complaint with the referee, charging the government with bargaining in bad faith.

We've raised in the House in recent days some of the more visibly stupid decisions that the government has made, such as locking out Ontario's new doctors from practice. But in this year's budget, buried at the back on page 89—I refer you to that page—where it wouldn't be seen, enters a new scenario of cruelty, because this government intends, first of all, to chop \$46 million out of our psychiatric hospitals' budgets, but it also intends to charge psychiatric patients for being in psychiatric hospitals. The government will bill people because they are sick and they need treatment. They're launching a frontal attack on 3,000 of the most vulnerable people in Ontario through this decision.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): And your question?

Mrs Sullivan: My question to the Minister of Health is, how dare you treat these vulnerable people in this way?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): First of all, I reject categorically the member's categorization of the actions that we are taking both to reform the health care system as well as to maintain its affordability. Surely, somebody who was part of that government understands that the kind of annual increases in expenditure for our health care system cannot be sustained and that the work of this government in trying to reduce the level of increase, while at the same time reforming the system to maintain its accessibility and its quality, is what we have to do if we are in fact to protect medicare.

With respect to the element in the budget that the member mentions, it is a matter for discussion with respect to our long-term care program that there are many elderly people in psychiatric hospitals who perhaps might well be better cared for in long-term care institutions such as nursing homes or homes for the aged, and who because there is no accommodation fee in psychogeriatric wards as there is in homes for the aged—we're talking about the \$37 a day that is the room-and-board part of the long-term care costs—may well be remaining in institutions, of which there are only 10 in the province, far away from their own community, far away from their own family, and who perhaps would be better cared for either in those communities or in institutions in those communities.

Mrs Sullivan: There are 12,000 psychiatric patients who are treated on an outpatient basis in Ontario. There are 3,000 psychiatric patients who are treated in psychiatric hospitals, because that is where they need the care. They need the secure facility. They need the psychiatrists and the efficient psychiatric staff on board in that hospital available to them.

This minister does not know if she's cutting expenses or if she's reforming the system, and she has not made a prioritization of one or the other. She is charging psychiatric patients who need care because they reside in a psychiatric institution. There is no other way of

looking at this issue.

But the cruelty continues, because also buried in the final pages of the budget is another continuing attack, this time on our senior citizens. This ministry and this minister are now going to charge seniors for drugs which they receive under the Ontario drug benefit plan. They are going to cut \$195 million from that program. This minister will know that user fees deter only the weakest from accessing health care. There is no analysis of any health benefits from instituting such a move. The minister knows she will only add suffering, inconvenience and stress to seniors by placing an additional burden on them.

My question to the minister is, how can you possibly justify such a move and on what basis did you make this decision?

Hon Mrs Grier: Let me respond to the preamble of the member's question and then to the substance of the issue that she moved on to, because I want her to know that reform of mental health in this province is a priority for this government and is something about which we will be moving in the very near future.

Mrs Sullivan: You have cut the budget on mental health.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Halton Centre.

Hon Mrs Grier: I know that one of my predecessors received a report from Mr Graham that talked about a reform of mental health—

Mrs Sullivan: You haven't implemented one government—

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mrs Grier: —services right across, from both the community-based—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order, member for Halton Centre.

Hon Mrs Grier: —to the institutional, a reform that has been long overdue.

With respect to the Ontario drug benefit plan, which was the second issue the member raised, let me point out to her that this too is an open-ended program, the cost of which has been increasing at double-digit rates over the past decade, if not for two decades. It is undoubtedly a fact—

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member for Halton-Centre, come to order.

Hon Mrs Grier: —that as we reform that program, we have to look at all of the components, to the manufacturers, to the pharmacists and to the consumers.

EYE EXAMINATIONS

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): My colleague the member from Markham, Mr Cousens, was going to ask a question, but he can't because the Premier's not here,

Ms Lankin's not here, the Treasurer's not here, so I'll ask a question to the Minister of Health once again.

As part of the expenditure control plan, the government has decided to deinsure routine eye exams performed by ophthalmologists and general practitioners. The result will be that optometrists will have a virtual monopoly on prescribing and dispensing eyewear and consumers will lose their ability to compare both costs and available products.

Minister, given that eye tests performed by optometrists cost the government more than the same tests performed by physicians and ophthalmologists, how do you expect to save \$2.1 million with this myopic expenditure control plan measure?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): There are a number of measures on our expenditure control program that we believe can in fact save us significant amounts of dollars without detracting one whit from the quality of care, and the examination of whether more than one annual routine eye examination per year is required is one of those measures.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I seek unanimous consent to deal with a motion today regarding notice on a number of private bills that are currently before the standing committee on regulations and private bills on Wednesday.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Do we have unanimous agreement? Agreed.

Hon Mr Charlton: I move that standing order 87 respecting notice of committee hearings be suspended for consideration of Bills Pr4, Pr13, Pr19, Pr77, Pr85 and Pr88 by the standing committee on regulations and private bills on Wednesday 2 June 1993.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

PETITIONS

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the members of the Legislative Assembly re Bill 38, an amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act to permit wide-open Sunday shopping and eliminate Sunday as a legal holiday.

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38. We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principle of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding when they must work and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man, but dates from God's creation and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all

people both physically and spiritually.

"We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

It's signed by 210 petitioners.

GAMBLING

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition and it reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three separate occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I support this petition as well.

1510

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I petition the Legislature of Ontario:

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario, and especially the area east of Toronto, have an increasing incidence of cancer; and

"Whereas the population of this area is increasing faster than all other areas in Ontario; and

"Whereas these citizens should be able to receive cancer treatment, including radiation therapy, within a reasonable distance from their homes; and

"Whereas the Oshawa General Hospital has plans to add radiation therapy to the cancer services it provides; and

"Whereas the Oshawa General Hospital has investigated the implications and submitted a report to implement such a program; and

"Whereas a large number of hospitals in the area have agreed to support the Oshawa General Hospital's proposal to expand cancer services, including a radiation therapy centre,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"To give immediate direction to the Ministry of Health, the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation and the Oshawa General Hospital to establish a cancer centre, including radiation treatment, and to set aside the necessary resources to provide treatment for cancer patients in the eastern section of the greater Toronto area and beyond to the north and east."

I am going to put my signature to this petition, and my signature will make 15,333 signatures.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member for Halton Centre. Point of order? The member for Parkdale.

Mr Tony Ruprecht (Parkdale): I would like to raise a point of order because the member did not tell us what's in those boxes. What I want to know is, are those boxes full of petitions? Is there something live in there or are we under some kind of a problematic situation with those boxes here?

The Speaker: I assumed they were petitions. Can the honourable member help us? Are there live things in there?

Mr Mills: Just petitions, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: I see. They are petitions.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which reads as follows:

"Whereas the provincial government, in its expenditure control plan, without consultation, has proposed to reduce the ability of new family practitioners, paediatricians and psychiatrists to receive full payment from the Ontario health insurance plan for services provided;

"Whereas the reduction of payments to these physicians will result in a lack of their ability to practise medicine;

"Whereas these same reductions in payments will limit the choice the citizens of Ontario have in selecting a physician of their choice;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must reconsider this arbitrary and restrictive decision and look at alternatives in consultation with the Ontario Medical Association and the Professional Association of Interns and Residents of Ontario."

I agree heartily with this petition and I have signed my name to it.

GAMBLING

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I've signed my name on this petition, and it's also signed by several hundred people from the Anglican church in the parishes of Stayner and Wasaga Beach. It was forwarded to me, and I thank the Reverend A. Chaffee for sending that to me.

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I add this to the thousands of signatures brought forward against this heinous bill, Bill 8, that's come to this Legislature on casino gambling:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

It is my great pleasure to affix my signature to this petition and hope that the government comes to its senses and stops this heinous bill.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition

signed by 172 people from the riding of Oxford, primarily the Woodstock area, but I see some names from pretty well all over the riding. I believe it's from some members of the Oxford presbyterial and it says:

"To the Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of a neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

DRUG BENEFITS

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition signed by members of the Buchanan Social Club in north Toronto.

"We are a senior citizens' club of 30 members who meet regularly at Fairlawn Heights United Church in Toronto. Since many of us require prescription drugs and most of the members are on moderate incomes with living costs increasing, we feel that the proposed plan of user fees could result in hardship for many.

"Therefore, we strongly protest the removal of this important part of health care. In anticipation of your help on behalf of senior citizens, we thank you."

Mr Speaker, I sincerely agree with this petition and affix my signature to it.

POST-POLIO SYNDROME

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I have a petition which contains a number of "whereas" clauses dealing with post-polio phenomenon, which is relatively new in our history.

This is from the Ottawa and District Post-Polio Association, which has been formed to help survivors of polio. This petition outlines the fact that it is not a well-known disease, the post-polio phenomenon, and that there are about 5,000 polio survivors in Ontario.

It says after the "whereas" clauses:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assem-

bly of Ontario to establish a post-polio clinic in the Rehabilitation Centre of Ottawa-Carleton for the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of patients and to disseminate information so that the estimated 1,000 known polio survivors in the centre's catchment area can receive adequate treatment and that the medical profession be educated regarding the post-polio syndrome."

I've affixed my signature to that petition.

GAMBLING

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I've got a petition here, like many others that were sent, on the casino issue, and it's been sent to me by Sutton Knox United Church and Virginia United Church. It has been mentioned at the church service on Sunday and it was signed by a number of people. They don't want the casinos to go forward, and I signed the petition.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): I have a petition signed by citizens of this province and it states:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of a neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there's a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald)," and they quote where it came from, and "(the Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

1520

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries;"—and you quite know about that, Mr Speaker—"and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction"—it's very important—"of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

They all signed here, and I would put my signature to this, and I'm sure that the table will accept it.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I have a petition, Mr Speaker:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan

currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I have affixed my signature, Mr Speaker.

GAMBLING

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): This petition concerns casino gambling.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

This is signed by such people as the Mutchers from Cowling Crescent in Ajax and Mr Wilson from Markham Street, and I will affix my signature.

PENSION FUNDS

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I have a petition signed by 300 or more firefighters, their families and friends, from my riding and ridings across the province opposing the use of firefighter pension funds by the Ontario investment fund. The petition is addressed to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from the many people who are firefighters who pay in, and I hereby file it.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

TOWNSHIP OF ALDBOROUGH AND THE VILLAGE OF RODNEY ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr North, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr87, An Act respecting the Township of Aldborough and the Village of Rodney.

ENVIRONMENTAL BILL OF RIGHTS, 1993

CHARTRE DES DROITS
ENVIRONNEMENTAUX DE 1993

On motion by Mr Wildman, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 26, An Act respecting Environmental Rights in Ontario /Loi concernant les droits environnementaux en Ontario.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The bill has included a detailed purpose. I won't go through it all because it is quite lengthy. I'll just say that I'm pleased to introduce the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights for first reading. This bill reflects the consensus forged among public environmental groups, industry and government. It will make environmental decision-making in Ontario more open and accountable than ever before.

This government believes that every individual has a valuable contribution to make in creating a sustainable economy in Ontario. Further, we believe that people must be given the power to make a difference to the environment. The Ontario bill of rights fills this need while setting new and higher standards of environmental protection now and for years to come.

CHUA DI-DA (AMIDATEMPLE)
OF TORONTO ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Ruprecht, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr11, An Act to revive Chua Di-Da (Amida-temple) of Toronto.

AGA MING PROPERTY OWNERS
ASSOCIATION ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Eves, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr17, An Act to revive Aga Ming Property Owners Association.

CITY OF OTTAWA ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Chiarelli, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr69, An Act respecting the City of Ottawa.

KOREAN CANADIAN CULTURAL
ASSOCIATION ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr David Johnson, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr5, An Act respecting the Korean Canadian Cultural Association.

ORDERS OF THE DAY
1993 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): I will wrap up my remarks on the budget today, and I'm pleased to have this opportunity on behalf of our caucus to com-

ment on it. I'd like to make it clear that our leader, the member for Nipissing, Mr Mike Harris, will, in the tradition of our party, have the wrap-up speech on the budget, which will take place when the House breaks off for its Christmas recess in December and be one of the last major presentations on the fiscal and monetary policy of this government.

So in leading off in my remarks, I was able to touch on a number of issues the other day. We've had constituency week, and an opportunity, as a caucus, to meet with thousands of people from across Ontario as we took our small mini-van to many different communities, asking people to comment on the budget.

We had a yellow form for people to comment on the budget. The numbers are still being counted. A lot of people thought we were NDP when they saw the colour of the form. I think the next time we do it we'll use a different colour—maybe white. That'll be closer to the gods.

1530

None the less, the feedback we've had from the many, many people we've been talking to is that they're tired of the eight years of tax increases. They're tired of politicians lying to them. They feel that when politicians come into office they start off with a set of goals and ambitions and beautiful stories and they draw pictures that they're going to make things better. That was the sense people had of Mr Rae and his group when they were elected on September 6, 1990. What they've felt from this budget is just something more serious than they could ever have expected, something that is going to hurt their lifestyle and their families and their business and that in fact impedes Ontario's opportunities for future advancement and development.

There are a number of points I wanted to make and I will be able to complete them now. I just really want to say, as I begin the process, that since the budget was released I haven't had any change of heart. In fact, having talked to as many people as we have, it strengthens the resolve and the purpose of our caucus and certainly our leader to continue to fight this government on what it's trying to do.

Instead of looking for ways of saving money and cutting back on expenditures, instead of making the tough decisions and instead of really trying to face up to ways in which we can see in the long term a balanced budget and a balanced fiscal program, this government has seen fit to levy one of the heaviest taxes in the history of the province—the heaviest tax. Over a year it would amount to some \$2 billion in increases. There is no government that has achieved this kind of record, and we're seeing it happen here now.

What we're really seeing is a government that came into office that somehow presented a dream of what it was going to do. It was a plan for people. What's happening now is that there is just a cleavage, a break-

ing through where you're seeing people fall through the cracks, because in a society where we want to have a balanced view of not only the social needs for people but also to build prosperity and a strong market economy, we have a government that has somehow severed itself from the market forces and is in isolation, developing policies that have nothing but bad news for every one of us.

There is a real problem when you have a government that comes in with those sets of shared values, those shared objectives that are going to be part and parcel of what it is going to be and do, a sense in which this government is going to build the instruments so that we can build in better checks and balances so that we continue to have the social blanket but we also continue to have a strong market economy.

I would like to say that we're into a structural problem where the government really has to be reviewed. We have just too much government in Canada, and I have to believe that with all the levels—federal, provincial, regional, municipal, and then school boards elected and then public utilities elected—we should face up to the cost of all this government and somehow put together a strategic way in which all levels of government remove duplication so that we get rid of the waste that's going on between the different levels as they overlap responsibilities. We have enough government for 130 million people, let alone the 30 million that are here. The lack of cooperation, the lack of synergy between the different levels is part of the concern that I see, where the local governments are screaming with anguish and pain at the breach of trust that has taken place between themselves and this government.

It's too bad there isn't any way in which we in opposition can force a recall of the New Democratic government in Ontario. People say: "Do something. You're down there, do something." I just have to make it very clear that in opposition we are able to try to make our point in the Legislature—we will in the standing committee on finance and economics when the Treasurer comes, we will in every way we can—but within the Legislature, the New Democratic government, which had 38% of the vote in 1990, has well over 50% of the votes, so it will always win the major decisions in the government.

Unless there's some kind of breaking away within the New Democratic caucus—we would need about seven New Democrats who are prepared to separate themselves from Bob Rae and his budget. We could defeat the government if seven or eight New Democrats decided to be away when that budget vote is taken or if they decided to change their vote and vote with the opposition.

I can say we beseech thinking members of the New Democrats to reconsider what they're doing and how

they are going to be voting on this budget. Their decision could change the history of Ontario so that we come back and have an opportunity for the public to choose who it is they want to govern.

There is no method of recall within this House. Unless the government loses a vote, Mr Rae and his government have the right and power and privilege to continue to govern this province. It's a one-party government, and since it's not minority, the decisions are made by an inner circle that surrounds Mr Rae and his cabinet and that therefore propels its caucus to support its agendas. If there were some way in which we could change the constitution for the province of Ontario, if you call it a constitution, or let there at least be a way so that we can recall a government, I would support that, so that even if in the future the Conservatives are in power and the public has a change of heart during office, there would be a way of removing them.

It is a fundamental plank where we as politicians have lost the trust of the people of Ontario, and there isn't any politician who can have a sense that he or she is always being credible. We have failed the people of Ontario. We get elected on a set of promises and hopes and aspirations, as I just described, and then when in office this very same government reverses its positions. I think any time that a government reverses its major priorities or reverses a promise and does anything like that, there should be the right of recall. There should be a way in which you go back either through a recall or a referendum to give the public that opportunity to speak up and say something about them.

I'm concerned as well on something else. I was reading a number of editorials across the province, and people are tarring every politician with the same brush and are saying: "Well, what's the difference between the Liberals or the Conservatives or any one of you? You're all the same."

There is an element of truth in that, because even in British Columbia you saw a socialist government have to legislate teachers back to work, and it was an all-party approval in order for it to happen, not unlike what's happened in this House in the past when the New Democrats in opposition were able to oppose everything. Now they're in government they're having to see the reality that in governing there are certain things they can't do as easily as they thought they could do when they were sitting in opposition and throwing stones.

But as I look at the differences between my party and the Liberals and the New Democrats, I really have to say that Mr Harris, our leader, has never been afraid to stand up and speak out on the hard decisions that have to be made, the hard decisions that would support expenditure cutbacks.

The fact of the matter is that in our party we know there is no such thing as an economic tooth fairy that is

going to come and give us some real support from a hidden place that isn't there. The economics are real. We've looked at the books. We know that Mr Laughren doesn't add too well and he's never been able to predict that well, but there are very real decisions that could be made by the government that would reduce expenditures of government.

You know, it has to do not only with reducing expenditures but increasing efficiencies. There isn't a business today in the private sector that hasn't gone through massive change within the last number of years, especially those that are not doing as well. They've had to find ways of increasing their effectiveness and being able to raise a profit and yet do it with less resources. It's not just through computerization, it's not just through better people; it's through new systems and new strategies and revising their plans. It's a way of looking at their accounting in a way that doesn't require as much paperwork as it did before. They're flying sometimes more by the seat of their pants than they were before. But business across our province, every person I talk to, is going through that process of fine-tuning its organizations.

Can we not do the same thing within the government of Ontario? It has not been part of the platform of the Liberal Party that there be that kind of significant change and improvement. They have not set out goals and objectives in that direction, and certainly this government has not.

1540

My second point which is a differentiator between ourselves and the other two parties in this House is the willingness to commit significant resources to develop a policy on taxation and financial planning for the province, and I commend again our caucus for the work we have done in putting together a New Directions document on finance. If anyone wants a copy of it within the House, I'll send them one. If anyone else wants to phone in for it, the number to obtain it is 1-800-665-MIKE.

If anyone wants to call the Conservative caucus's information line to receive documents of our policy, which we have in writing, in advance of the election—and the basis of this is what we stand for and we believe; we've put a stake in the ground and said, "This is what we believe and want to do as a government in the province of Ontario"—if anyone wants to receive a copy of that, call 1-800-665-MIKE.

We have committed these resources in a significant way in order to establish a foundation for future planning. We want to get people's feedback on it. We want feedback from every level within our society: the workers, the people who aren't working, the executives, the management, people at every level, union members, parents, young people. Let everybody react to what it is we're saying so that we can continue to develop a

consensus for action for the province of Ontario.

The other thing that's a differentiator, and I see that as something where as a caucus—certainly Mike Harris, our leader for three years, has been consistent in fighting for no taxes, reduced expenditures and increased deficiencies in the province of Ontario. I commend him for it. I support him in that. I supported him in that when the Liberals were in office, and as now we see the whole situation deteriorating even further, I know that his position of leadership is the position that I couldn't support more strongly.

Next I want to talk about consistency. We have been talking about good management of the government, of fiscal responsibility for a long, long time. I think we've suffered some very tough lessons. I'll tell you, ladies and gentlemen of the House who are having the pleasure of taking this in, we learned some tough lessons. Having lost the government in 1985 and having been one of the members who was here then and was in Frank Miller's cabinet for a short time, I happen to know why we lost the trust of the people of Ontario. Because after 40 years of doing the right things, in the latter years we confused those right things with some other signals, and the people of Ontario were not pleased with what they saw happening.

We've gone back to our roots. We've gone back to understand who it is we are and what it is we stand for. From the very beginning, when this government came out with its labour legislation, Bill 40, we stood up and opposed it and have made the commitment that when elected to government, we will repeal Bill 40, the labour legislation brought in by this government. We have been consistent on that and we've been consistent on other positions as well.

We know that the Bill 143 legislation of this government is flawed, the way in which it's trying to deal with the disposal of waste within these communities. We have tabled our agenda and we are clear and consistent on it. The fact is, I can just say that has not been the case with the Liberal Party nor with the New Democrats. The New Democrats, I should say, are consistent, because they're on the other side of the position I'm describing.

I think the fourth point that would separate the Conservatives from the Liberals and from the New Democrats is nine words. Nine words will separate me from every New Democrat and most Liberals, but certainly the majority of Liberals have not accepted the importance of these nine words. That is, as a Conservative and as someone within our caucus, we believe in the marketplace; the others don't. The marketplace has forces at work that cause checks and balances, that make for a better economy, better operations. It means that everyone can win, especially if you're able to balance off the needs of the marketplace with the social responsibility that we must have as politicians. We're

able to balance out the economic reality as well as the social responsibilities.

Therefore we would come along—unlike the Liberals who came along and ballooned the size of government, ballooned the expenditures of the government, ballooned the debt of the government—and say, “Hey, you’ve got to control your costs, you’ve got to control the number of people you’ve got on here, you’ve got to control your expectations.”

There isn’t any doubt that we have to come together and tackle the problem together. There has to be a new coalition of public support to somehow work things out in harmony. We are now seeing Bob Rae and his government in opposition to the unions and other groups in the social contract that has totally broken down the relationships they had in the past, partly because they’ve surprised everyone with what they’re trying to do and partly by the way in which they’re going about it.

What has happened is that the government hit the panic button. They hit the panic button, bang, and off they went. Everything that went prior to that panic button time has been shoved aside. All the statements, all the promises, all the goodwill has been shoved aside in order to proceed with what has happened with this panic button.

Whether or not it was a visit from the International Monetary Fund, whether or not it was the bond rating agencies, which are sitting there watching what is happening in Ontario, aware that if Ontario so much as burps in the next period of time, so much as doesn’t fulfil any of the expectations that are laid upon us, if the social contract doesn’t work, if we’re not able to see the forecasts come in—

Interjection.

Mr Cousens: You’ll have a chance for the floor, Howard.

If the government doesn’t achieve its anticipated goals, regardless of how it doesn’t, there is going to be more than a ripple effect; it’s going to be a very serious impact on Ontario’s economy from the outside. In fact, the tragedy is that we’re owned so much by outside investors. We no longer control our destiny, because so much of every dollar we ever take in goes into paying interest on the accumulated debt.

No, I think we’ve learned that we’re not going to grow our way out of the problems that we have today. We’re going to have to earn our way out. We’re going to have to have a strategy that says: “Here is our long-term plan. Here is how we are going to work together. Here is our vision for the future of Ontario. Here is what we want to achieve in Ontario for the long term.”

Let us all understand that Ontario could well be one of the most competitive, prosperous jurisdictions in the world. I haven’t heard that ever from a New Democrat as they continue to undermine what Ontario is all about.

Instead, we are becoming the most heavily taxed jurisdiction in the world. And this budget, this fiscal policy, this social contract, this whole program that’s been brought forward by Bob Rae and his government is setting us back instead of giving us an image and a future. It is closing that future down. Instead of a Depression that just dropped in the 1930s, we’re slipping and slipping and slipping, and what we really need to do is hit the bottom as fast as we can. Maybe we’re there. I somehow don’t know whether we’re there or not.

Now, I don’t want to be a foreboder of bad news, but let us begin to come out of that. Let’s begin to climb back so that there is an opportunity for people to find jobs and find work. But Mr Rae himself probably gives us as good an insight as any. He had an interview not all that long ago which was in the *Ottawa Sunday Sun* on May 9, “It’s the Time to Bite the Bullet.”

The question is, you keep saying that we all have to solve this problem, but the unions don’t seem to be on side at all. How can you bring them to the table? Mr Rae goes on and says: “Persistence, patience, persuasion. Just keep at it. When people look at the alternatives, I think that sitting down and talking about solutions becomes much more compelling.”

Here’s what I want you to listen to carefully. He says, “We’ve been in a state of denial in which I participated for a very long time.” That’s the first sign of a confession that I’ve seen from Mr Rae, who helped push the Liberal government in their accord in 1985, and who in his own budget two years ago, where he thought he could spend his way out of the recession, denied the truth and the fact and the reality that Ontario has to work together with everybody else in order to succeed. Yet here he is finally admitting that he participated in that denial for a very long period of time.

Now we reap the benefit of his denial. Now we, as the citizens of Ontario, hear the Premier at last face up to the fact that he has not faced up to the truth, that he hasn’t faced up to the reality, and now we begin to reap the harvest of that. Let us at least come back to square one and find a way in which all parties can share in the solution to Ontario’s economic prosperity for the future. Let us find ways where I, as a member of the opposition, can support the government on its initiatives, and I am prepared to.

When I first heard the social contract being suggested, when I first heard the expenditure control plan, I said, “This is one step forward.” Yet I said, “If there are going to be tax increases, it will be two steps back.” My concern is that the moment this government realizes that the taxpayer is going to have to be paying out more, when we’re already paying out more than any other jurisdiction in North America or the world, then it has made a fundamental flaw in its thinking.

We have to find a way to move to a balanced budget,

to move to expectations where the public accepts what the politicians are doing, and that we're reacting to them, rather than special interest groups, that the interests of all the people of all the province be served by all people in government. That's not happening now. We are betraying the trust they've given to us.

1550

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): This completes lead speakers in the debate. Further debate, the honourable member for Oxford.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): It's a pleasure for me to lead off the debate for the government side on the budget.

Having had a week to be in my riding and hear from people, I certainly understand that not everyone is happy with all aspects of the budget. But certainly the common message I got from people was that they're supportive of the direction. They're supportive of a direction of a balanced approach, which is really what this budget and this document about the direction and the economic plan of this province is all about.

They're pleased that we're dealing with the fiscal issues, but they're also pleased that we're not ignoring people, that we're not ignoring realities out there and that we have a plan here for investing in jobs, in people and in maintaining our services.

Of course, the balanced approach has been a three-point approach. It has come through expenditure controls, the expenditure control plan, which was announced on April 23 as a way to get a handle on some of the expenditures of the government. The other approach, of course, is the \$2 billion from the social contract, and the third approach, revenues. Of course, we all understand that we're not going to try to kid anyone. Taxes are never a popular item. Most people don't like paying taxes; they don't like paying increased taxes. But what I think really distinguishes what we've done here on the revenue side is that we took an approach to make a more progressive and fairer tax system.

We did that by ensuring that the largest portion of the tax increases was through the income tax system which, as we know, is the more progressive system. We also did that by ensuring that the largest portion would come from high-income earners through the implementation of surtaxes on the high-income earners. So it works out that in the next year that top 10%—I'm saying in the 1994 tax year—will be contributing 25% of the increased revenue from the personal income tax and that makes it fairer.

Of course, we also responded to concerns about unfair taxes. That was certainly demonstrated by the Finance minister removing the tire tax, that wonderful invention of the previous government that was designed to—well, allegedly designed to deal with the issues of

recycling tires. We know there were problems in collecting it, that it was an annoyance for many small business people and certainly, Mr Speaker, you know that many farmers complained about that tax as well. I know many people in my riding are very happy that the government was able to remove that tax.

Many people are saying, "Well, you haven't done anything to deal with employment"—or some of the critics of this budget are saying this. This budget commits the government to investing almost \$4 billion in capital works to create jobs and renew infrastructure.

My community is benefiting from that. The good people in the village of Tavistock in the northern end of my riding—their school has needed an addition for many, many years. It came to the point where the growth has gone to about 450 students at that school. They only had two washrooms and they had, I think, about 11 portables. Through Jobs Ontario Capital, they are going to get an addition to that school so we can meet the needs of that community and the people in that community. I know those people are very grateful for the Jobs Ontario Capital plan.

The children's aid society, which has a legislated mandate to provide services, has been in cramped quarters, hasn't been able to provide the space in the way it has. Some of its workers have had to share offices, and of course the issue of confidentiality related to their work has been a problem. They have received funding through Jobs Ontario Capital.

The Woodstock Museum has received funding through Jobs Ontario Capital, which is also going to put people to work, but will allow it to expand its services and also, I believe, is going to help the local economy. The Woodstock Museum and Museum Square are a focal point for the downtown in the city of Woodstock. Right now, because it's not accessible for the disabled, it can't really accept many bus tours through some of these renovations. It will allow its numbers to increase and attract more bus tours into the city, and that's going to help the local economy.

Another important aspect of supporting jobs and investment in this budget is through the community economic development initiative. I'm really looking forward to the Jobs Ontario Community Action and I can tell this House that many local officials have commented, both to me and publicly in the media, that they are looking forward to this initiative and feel it's long overdue.

The Jobs Ontario Community Action plan clearly recognizes the fact that local communities need to come together to make decisions about their future, about planning their economy. This will allow them to do that in many different ways. It will allow them to set priorities about where government funding should be going, because we know people in local communities can set those priorities more effectively.

It also allows for the provision of investing \$100 million in permanent private sector job creation in communities in other areas and will allow communities to really take a greater control over the decision-making and the future of economic development. Communities have been calling for that for a long time.

In terms of dealing with the financial issues, some people have said that this government has become infatuated with the debt and the deficit. I don't believe that is true. We need to deal with those issues. We need to deal with the debt and the deficit and make sure that our financial house is in order in order that we can continue to maintain our investments in jobs, through Jobs Ontario Capital, Jobs Ontario Training etc.

We need to ensure that we have our financial house in order so that we can preserve those essential public services—our health care system, our education system—those things that people have come together on as Ontarians and said, “This is what it is that makes us different from our neighbours to the south.”

Yes, we do pay a little higher in taxes—no one disagrees with that—but in paying those higher taxes we have a much better quality of life in this province and we have much better communities, I think, in many ways than some of our neighbouring communities or neighbouring jurisdictions, particularly those to the south.

Of course, another important component in this day and age, with technological change, with globalization and with new technologies developing, is a commitment to education and training and retraining. This government, through this budget, has committed \$1.2 billion to training and skills development. That figure is investing almost twice as much as was invested in training just as little as four years ago. We're also continuing our investment in the Jobs Ontario Training program so up to another 40,000 unemployed workers can receive the benefits of that program. I'm sure some of my colleagues will go into more detail.

I just want to say that we've heard the Leader of the Opposition be quite critical of this Jobs Ontario Training. It was interesting that a couple of weeks ago the Tillsonburg Independent News, a local community newspaper, interviewed the local people who are administering the program. They took exception to those criticisms. Quite frankly, they said that the type of criticisms the Leader of the Opposition was making—that people were only getting low-paying jobs, minimum wage jobs, off the Jobs Ontario Training program—simply wasn't the case, that they were able to place people in well-paying jobs that would allow them to develop skills and have marketable skills later on.

In fact, the editorial in the paper even went to the point of saying that, in effect, the opposition was really off base in its criticism of Jobs Ontario Training and maybe what it really should do is admit the fact that

this government does have good ideas and that the Jobs Ontario Training program is an excellent idea of encouraging and helping to create a positive training climate in this province, because we know that's going to be important moving into the future.

1600

We've also heard criticisms that this budget is going to kill jobs. I want to dispute that fact. This budget is about creating jobs, supporting jobs and supporting a healthy economy.

It is quite clear that we need to ensure that we have our financial house in order. We have done that through a very, very balanced approach, as I mentioned earlier, in terms of the expenditure control plan, the savings achieved from the social contract and probably—as I say, not the most popular way of doing it—also through revenue increases.

We've certainly heard the comments from the member from Markham and in question period today from the leader of the third party, who wants to continue to indicate to the people that we can get our financial house in order without any tax increases, that somehow there's a magic way of doing that, and without having any impact on services in our communities.

I want to say I had two town hall meetings in my riding during constituency week. We had a good discussion with people, some who were unhappy about tax increases, some who were also unhappy about some of the cuts we already made and some who felt we should have made even more dramatic cuts. As we held more discussions, people began to understand what those impacts are on local communities.

I think overall, while people may not be happy with what is having to be done, I'm certainly getting a message from more and more people that they believe this is the government that is finally dealing with the fiscal issues. They have a belief that while it may be still a difficult period of time because unemployment is going to remain high, in the long run, because of the decisions we're making in terms of ensuring our fiscal house continues to stay in order—a strong commitment to creating jobs through capital, the innovative approach, recognizing that communities need to develop their own priorities and that they are the best at deciding their own priorities for economic development, and our significant investment in training—Ontario is going to be regaining its prosperity, jobs will be coming back and Ontario will continue to be a very, very good place for people to live, a very good place for people to invest their money, a place where people can earn a good wage, work at good-paying jobs, feel good about their communities, where businesses will prosper because they'll be able to hire skilled workers and they will be able to make a profit at their business.

So I want to say I believe that while difficult decisions had to be made—this budget has some very tough

decisions—I think overall the Finance minister, with this plan, has developed a good, balanced approach for dealing with these very difficult, and I want to say almost unprecedented, economic times due to the significant revenue declines that have occurred in the last three years, which is something the Liberal government didn't have to face. Even the Conservative government in the 1982-83 recession has not had to face what this government has had to do.

We've made the difficult decisions, we are continuing our investment in jobs, in people and in services, and in the long run the province is going to be a better place for everyone and for future generations.

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): I find the speech from the member for Oxford rather confusing. He talks about \$4 billion being put into the infrastructure of this province through budget 1993, and he goes so far as to give the suggestion of washrooms, I think it was, in a school as one of the initiatives of this government in budget 1993. I'm sorry; those of us who have served in this Legislature and even an ordinary Ontarian walking on the streets would realize this is part of regular government spending, to keep up the infrastructure of this province, which they have invested in in their hard-earned money over the last decades. To talk about this as a new initiative is at best misplaced, if not something else.

Then we go on to talk about the surtax and how wonderful this is and how we're getting more and more people involved in the surtax structure. Anybody who knows anything about people who have some money to invest—and we're getting down to some pretty small amounts when we're talking about people who are making \$51,000, but even if people have \$2,000, \$3,000, \$4,000 to invest, that's no sin, you know. That's no sin to have a bit of money to invest in the province of Ontario. But I'm telling you, now they're going to think of better places to invest, and money is mobile, folks. Investment is mobile.

And again we hear the Jobs Ontario program blown beyond all proportions of expectation and possibility.

I think the member for Oxford had better continue to listen, because I think he's going to learn lots in the next few weeks.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Very briefly in response to both my colleague from Oxford and the Liberal member who just responded to that debate, I'd like to point out that over the past several days I've had an opportunity to talk to some civil servants here who work for the provincial government, and I can tell my colleague, my Liberal friend, that there's a real rationalization of expenditures that's finally beginning to take root in the civil service, Mr Speaker. As you will know, when you check the budget numbers and the estimates for ministries, substantial amounts of moneys were eliminated from ministry budgets without touching

programs. Why? Because we just simply asked civil servants to be a little more accountable with money.

You hear of the horror stories when there was a lot of money around this place in the heyday of the Liberals, when there were hundreds of thousands of dollars left in budgets and millions of dollars left in ministry budgets where year-end came along, and what did you do? Well, you had a whole bunch of people going out on a shopping rampage. It didn't matter. They just spent it here; they spent it there; they spent it everywhere.

If you buy people a pen and they pick up a brand-new pen and just use it several times, use maybe that much of the ink in the pen, then what happens? Because you've got a lot of money, you chuck that pen out and you go get a new one.

When you have to rationalize some of these things and people are asked to be more frugal with what they have, then you will realize enormous savings in the systems. So I would caution my Liberal friends that when they stand up in this place and talk about how frugal and how crafty they were, they'd better look at it once again.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I have a hard time understanding why a Liberal would stand up opposed to any tax increase that any government, perhaps, would implement when the Liberals, if she doesn't remember, increased taxes 33 times in the short five years that they were the government. She doesn't seem to realize or remember that this criticism that she's giving us perhaps is three years too late.

Remember the days of the Liberals. Remember the days of the 33 tax increases that you implemented in a short five years. Remember the fact that you pretty much doubled government expenditure while you were there, in five years, and you have the nerve to stand up in this place and criticize an individual who did not condone a tax increase. He isn't saying in his speech—

The Acting Speaker: I want to remind the honourable member we're at questions and comments on the member for Oxford's participation.

Mr Mammoliti: Yes, Mr Speaker, I realize that. I was just about to say that the member for Oxford doesn't necessarily think that tax increases are okay. What he is saying is that if you're going to implement tax increases, do it in a fair way. He's saying that the government has done that. Remember the Liberals; remember those 33 tax increases and remember how fair those tax increases were. That's what the member for Oxford is saying.

1610

The Acting Speaker: We can accommodate one final participant on questions and comments for the member for Oxford. Seeing none, the member for Oxford has two minutes in response.

Mr Sutherland: I want to thank those who partici-

pated, the member for Ottawa-Rideau, my colleagues from Downsview and from Yorkview.

The member for Ottawa-Rideau must not have heard my comments regarding the Jobs Ontario Capital project I was talking about at the Tavistock school. Yes, we have regular capital money that goes through for education, for building schools, but the Tavistock school project comes out of a separate amount. So rather than how the \$300 million is allocated with kind of a three-year advance process, this money was allocated this year and the actual project is occurring this year.

It's not just simply adding new washrooms. What I was trying to say is that the school has grown; the school's population has grown; the physical facilities hadn't, and as a result there were only two washrooms serving 450 students in an elementary school. Clearly, that was unacceptable. I was showing how this is building our infrastructure, supporting a community, responding to a community need and creating jobs at the same time.

The member for Ottawa-Rideau also talked about the surtax and said that earning extra money is not a sin. Of course it's not. We encourage people to earn as much money as possible. We think that's a good thing. But in terms of taxation, as my colleague from Yorkview said, people aren't going to be happy about paying more taxes, granted, but I think they'll find it more acceptable if they have more faith in that we're developing a fairer tax system. That was the point I was making there, that through the increases in the surtax on the top 10% of income earners in this province, in terms of them paying a larger share, we are moving to a fair tax system.

The Acting Speaker: I wish to thank the honourable member for his participation in both debate and responses. Further debate? The honourable member for Ottawa-Rideau.

Mrs O'Neill: I rise today as the official opposition critic for the Ministry of Community and Social Services and for seniors' issues and as the member for Ottawa-Rideau. I do so with deep disappointment in this government and its continued mismanagement of Ontario's economy.

Last week we all saw this document flashed on TV and in the newspapers and many of the headlines and many of the commentators stated, "a disappointing document," "a difficult piece." Each of them introduced the budget discussions in that manner; I'm not the only person who has the concerns that I'm going to relay this afternoon.

I remind this chamber that the budget is the government's main policy document, as any budget is. It is more than significant that budget 1993 has already created discouragement, confusion, panic and hopelessness among Ontarians. This government's main policy document, and I repeat, main policy document, paral-

yses Ontario in summer 1993. Budget 1993 purports to protect Ontario's most vulnerable citizens, but the 20 new taxes and the 26 non-tax revenues will affect the most vulnerable perhaps, and likely more than anyone else in this province. Seniors, youth, the disabled and the less fortunate always have less disposable income than most of us and they will certainly have less disposable income in 1993 than they had in 1992.

To quote from page 61 of this year's budget: "The continuing uncertainty over the economy, and concerns over job security in 1992-93, resulted in consumers spending proportionately less on durable goods...and more on necessities such as food." That, sadly, is the situation that is going to worsen. Consumers, especially those who have limited incomes, will have fewer and fewer choices as a direct result of budget '93.

Budget '93, like budgets '91 and '92, is a document devoid of any real commitment or any real solutions to the problems in this province of those most in need: those most in need of government support in difficult economic times, whether they be our young people, the unemployed, the disabled, seniors and many others who have been ignored, and some of them indeed marginalized by this very government that purports to help them.

I ask, what about the students who are graduating this year, some of them so discouraged they're not going to their own graduations? They are trying to get their foot in the door, just inside the door in a very, very closed and jeopardized job market where the unemployment rate for the 16- to 24-year-olds is 18%. What about the people attempting to get off social assistance through the supports to employment program with its increasingly limited criteria? And where are the new jobs to come from for STEP? Businesses small and large find no incentives in this budget, and indeed we can look forward to more layoffs.

Budget '93, like budgets '91 and '92, is a veneer, a smokescreen. It's a little thinner smokescreen, but it's a smokescreen, a thin coating to cover the fact that we cannot trust what we see at first glance. It is the role of opposition to look behind the veneer, underneath it, to discover whether or not the government is telling the people of Ontario the whole story with respect to our province's finances.

As my leader in her response to this budget on May 20 pointed out, this government now has presented three budgets to the people of Ontario, and not one of these budgets has had a deficit projection that was reached. Deficit targets are not met by this budget even though we have this unbearable \$10-billion threshold which was started by this very fiscally mismanaged NDP government.

Last year's budget promised a deficit of \$9.9 billion. Isn't that a cute figure? And at year's end, what was the reality? It was \$12 billion, but somewhere in between

we heard \$17 billion. Where do these figures come from?

Budget '92 promised us \$580 million in revenue from basic Ontario income tax increases beginning in this year, January 1993—half a billion dollars, a little more: \$580 million. That figure, in this year's budget, has been almost doubled, if you can believe that, to \$960 million—I repeat, almost \$1 billion in an income tax grab in a time of recession when the recovery is fragile.

Another projection: Tax reductions for low-income earners, tax reductions now for low-income workers, projected at \$85 million for 1992, but they actually came in at \$10 million. These are but three examples that come to mind. How does the Treasurer expect the people of this province to have any confidence in his ability to project or to wisely manage their tax dollars?
1620

On the very first page of last year's budget statement the Treasurer said: "We are taking immediate steps to create jobs, we are maintaining important public services, and we are controlling the deficit." That was last year. This, as we have seen, was nothing but empty eloquence, much of it even admitted by this government.

What we really had in 1992 and have again this year is a case of creative accounting, a dubious deficit at best, and one thing for sure, always for sure: higher taxes for the individuals of this province. But now we're also going to have higher taxes for the corporations. That's the beautiful promise for 1994.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: At this point, I think there are less than 12 people in this House and I think they should be here to listen to Mrs O'Neill.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have a quorum? A quorum is not present.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum now is present. The honourable member for Ottawa-Rideau may resume.

Mrs O'Neill: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I'll continue. We have, as I said, always the promise that comes true: higher taxes. And this time we've got another promise: higher taxes for corporations as well as individuals.

On the first page of this year's legislative address, the Minister of Finance laid out his priorities for the people of Ontario. One of those priorities was, and I quote from this document, "We are going to overhaul the social assistance system to provide more support to help get people back into the workforce." Of course I was very interested in that particular part of the budget, because it's something we've all been waiting for.

This year's budget contains promises and promises, because we now have words changed. We were "revamping" social assistance to help people get back to

work last year and we are "overhauling" this year. I wish I could get a picture of those two things. "Overhaul, revamp," what do they mean? Because we have still got promises, promises, unfulfilled expectations. But later in the document we get into the fine print and we see the budget proposals. We find out a little more clearly what the fine-sounding rhetoric "overhaul" means.

What the Minister of Finance was really saying was that this year the NDP government will release a white paper on social assistance reform, and the reform is going to take place off in the distance of 1995. Read my lips—can't believe it. We've been talking about this since 1990. This year it's on hold. The vulnerable people of this province are placed on a shelf, on hold: 1995. Our plan was in place in their upper right-hand drawer and it has not been used.

I stood in this House a few weeks ago to debate the resolution put forward by the member for Sarnia, which called for the provision of one comprehensive piece of legislation and one administrative framework administered by one level of government to replace the existing general welfare and family benefit delivery system. As you know, this resolution by an NDP backbencher would fulfil a long-standing promise of this government to finally act on a legislative reform of the social services structure.

I asked at that time, and I ask again now of this government, why did a government backbencher have to raise this issue as a private member's resolution—he must be as frustrated as I am—when the Minister of Community and Social Services should have introduced it as a government bill? And we're not even thinking of a government bill; we're thinking of a white paper.

But what is this government's response? The member for Sarnia knows and I know that we have enough paper on social assistance reform. We know how to do it; let's get it done. Another postponement to 1995 is a completely unnecessary step. I find it most disturbing that this Treasurer considers this to be a solution that will—and I again quote from this year's budget document—"transform a social assistance system that connects people to education, to training, to work and volunteer community activity."

No one argues with the goals, but the time lines, I can't believe them. We're going to wait for two years to connect people to education and training and work? I truly believe that now is the time for action, to use one of the titles of one of the best documents we have on social reform, not a white paper with promises for 1995.

I also suggest that budget 1993 is a difficult one for seniors of this province. The 1992 budget promised a \$100-million increase to the seniors in the reform of long-term care. The 1993 budget tells us that the government plans to speed up the long-term care reform. Again, this sounds very promising.

The reality of long-term care reform in the province of Ontario, however, is a very different kettle of fish. Money which was to begin to flow in January 1993, way back in January 1993—most of us can hardly remember it—has now been promised for perhaps August 1993. I ask, is this the new definition, of this NDP government, of “speed”? Nine months late we’re talking about speed.

The government’s proposal for long-term care reform, which was begun with the passage of Bill 101 earlier this session, was very short on details and still is. It has fuzzy time lines, January to August—“speed” is a very fuzzy time line—and very indefinite, to this moment, funding commitments. And indeed it’s described by the minister herself as but one piece in a complex puzzle.

I, for one, am not convinced by the Treasurer on this item. Seniors continue to be hit hard by last year’s budget because changes to the property tax rebate and changes to the Ontario drug benefits plan are now beginning to affect them. This government’s proposals regarding auto insurance and warranties of almost every kind will increase premiums for all Ontarians, including seniors who, as we know, are often on fixed incomes.

Budget ’93 will hurt everyone. It’s the biggest tax grab Ontario taxpayers have seen since Frank Miller’s budget of 1981. Fully 85% of Ontarians will pay higher taxes, and because the personal income tax provisions are retroactive—we love this looking back in this government—the tax increases will actually be doubled on July 1 for 1993. So each person will take minus 6% home on July 1, 1993, this on top of a tax increase that became effective on January 1 as a result of last year’s budget. So now we have two tax increases taking effect on the same day. Isn’t that wonderful? This is indeed the NDP double-dipping into the pockets of the people of Ontario, and the people of Ontario know what’s happening.

1630

The surtax on Ontario’s so-called “wealthiest citizen,” a tax on a tax, kicks in at an even lower income than last year. As Ontario taxpayers continue to really struggle, this government continues to redefine the term “wealthy” to include more and more Ontarians. In fact, under certain circumstances—it’s very hard to believe but it’s true—the poverty line and the threshold for wealth in the province of Ontario, unlike any other jurisdiction in North America and likely beyond, is now \$10,000, the difference between the poverty line and the threshold definition of “wealth.” That is ludicrous. Where is the middle class? Is the middle class disappearing in Ontario, or is it just being hit harder and harder and harder? I think it’s the latter.

If I may, as the member for Ottawa-Rideau, turn to another subject for a moment, I found it impossible, and I find it impossible at this moment, to accept the fact that the government once again has conspicuously

ignored eastern Ontario in this budget. It’s hard to believe that the commitment to the construction of Highway 416 is not among the capital priorities of the Ministry of Transportation in budget ’93.

The construction of this important highway is of vital importance to the economy of Ottawa-Carleton and every member of that government must know that. This has been acknowledged over and over again by the constituents of Ottawa-Carleton and much of eastern Ontario, and business and industry have, for over a decade, made representations to each government.

This highway was begun by the previous government and now is on hold. It is sad to see the interchanges that are sitting in the middle of fields, literally, and there is no commitment to continue that highway in eastern Ontario in budget ’93.

I urge the government to live up to the commitment made by the then Minister of Transportation, Mr Philip, and I quote from Hansard, November 21, 1990. Again, that’s a long way in the past, but surely some promises must be kept by this government. “The highway,” Mr Philip said in 1990, folks, “will be completed on time, on schedule,” and all problems will be dealt with. Promises, promises, promises, unkept promises, but promises unkept that change lives, that make for hardships in peoples’ lives.

Talking about hardships, buried on page 66 of this document is a list of 26 new—listen to this term—“non-tax revenue initiatives.” Isn’t that an interesting title? These non-tax revenues represent nothing but a hidden tax grab that goes deeper and deeper into my pocket, your pocket and everybody else’s pocket, \$5 million worth, and will impact on everything from motor vehicle licence fees, provincial fines and penalties, charitable event fees—imagine, to hit a charitable event for an increase—registrar general’s service fees—and that is the most wonderful service we have in Ontario, the registrar general; the backlog is unbelievable, but we’re going to have an increased charge for death certificates and birth certificates and all things people need to do business in this province—technical standards fees, and these are just a few of the 26 that are there.

This budget claims that the new non-tax revenue strategy—listen to this—is “intended to encourage new ways of doing business and to enhance customer service in the public sector.” New ways of not doing business would be much more accurate. An increase in the prices of public service would be much more accurate. Sadly, I make those observations.

Many of these initiatives strike directly at the already belaboured Ontario taxpayer. Members of the tourism, development and aggregate and transportation industries, to name but a few, are being especially targeted, and many other industries are being asked to go into a holding pattern.

As my leader said in her remarks last week, "The math is simple, but I'm disappointed to say the numbers just don't add up." This budget does not encourage growth. It does not stimulate the economy or create jobs, as this government would have us believe. This budget and its accompanying social contract negotiations just paralyze this province. The Treasurer seems to be determined to stagnate, if not completely stop, the fragile economic recovery. Mr Laughren and Mr Rae are raising taxes, cutting vital services, alienating both the public and private sectors and the municipalities in particular. Certainly, Mr Rae has heard from those people very recently, and let's face it, those are elected officials, as are we.

This government, with its heavy-handed, ideological manipulation—we could name several cases where that is happening—is putting all Ontarians, especially those who are vulnerable, at a great risk. This budget, devoid of signs of hope, I'm sad to say, is a deplorable breach of trust on the part of this government.

In addition to the \$2-billion tax grab—\$1 billion, as I've said before, almost completely from income tax—this budget promises an additional \$2-billion savings for Bob Rae and Floyd Laughren from the social contract. But you know, Mr Speaker, and I do, that the Treasurer is counting his contract before it's signed. It's becoming more and more evident every day, as the June 4 deadline rapidly approaches, that these negotiations are starting to collapse, to fall apart, and they're doing it right around the Premier's ears, if we listened to him in question period today. He's still denying the reality that's existing.

Almost daily we hear—most of us hear directly—from one group or another leaving the talks. They're not doing that because they want to do it; they are doing it because they've given up hope, because they realize their efforts are not progressing and they find the whole thing a very discouraging process. They're pulling out of the sectoral discussions in complete frustration at this government's unwillingness to look constructively at any solutions which are not its own, and the municipalities are the best messengers of that.

Solutions that are made in Queen's Park are not going to satisfy Ontarians across this province, but this government has turned a very large door and shut the door in the faces of people who are suggesting that there are other solutions beyond its own.

I'd like to close with a comment from the Urban Development Institute of Ontario president, Morley Kells, who states in a letter to his membership: "We find that we are out ahead of Premier Rae's ability to enunciate precisely what he is after and how he hopes to achieve this reordering of society: how we work, get paid and prioritize our lives." That is what Mr Rae is trying to tell us and that's what I was talking about when I was talking about the ideology of this govern-

ment. They want to tell us how to work, how to get paid and how to prioritize our lives.

Mr Morley Kells goes on: "Whether it be a new crown corporation or a social contract, the details are sketchy and the facts are few." That's very common. "The Premier needs time to package and unveil his brave new world."

I really don't believe personally that time will do it for Mr Rae. Wisdom would, but that virtue has not been found in Ontario's NDP government. The government's inability to articulate right from the beginning its brave new world with any certainty, with any time lines or details, leaves Ontarians, after three NDP budgets, full of broken promises and unfulfilled expectations and indeed, unfortunately, unsure of their futures and insecure in their present; as I said before, paralysed, fearful and helpless.

Budget '93 is a panicked response to this government's continued inability to manage the economy, to create real, sustainable jobs and to bring Ontario out of the recession. What we really have, as we had in budget '92, is a case of creative accounting, a dubious deficit, higher taxes for all but a few Ontarians and a job creation strategy that continues to be unrealistically ambitious and ineffective.

As commentators stated last year, the budget contains no new insights, no indications that the NDP wants to understand the dynamics of the market economy. This NDP government, locked into its anti-capitalist creed, still sees the private sector as a source of tax revenue and investment, that's all, without any understanding of where the tax revenue and investment flows or comes from.

Sadly, the mistakes of 1992 have become entrenched in the mismanagement of budget '93. Ontario is the worse, I say with deep regret, for budget '93 NDP-style.

1640

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I certainly want to compliment the member for Ottawa-Rideau for her very fine speech. She certainly has brought to, I hope, the government's attention that there are many, many people out there who are so disappointed in what this budget had to offer.

I was particularly interested in her mention of what it is doing to senior citizens and many other vulnerable people out there. I must admit that just a few days ago I had a call from a 74-year-old senior in my riding who went to renew her driver's licence. She said: "Mrs Fawcett, I'm on a fixed income. I do not have any extra money at all." She got to the counter and of course had to pay the extra for, now, a six-year licence. She said: "What do I need a six-year licence for? I may not be here in another six years." I said, "I certainly hope you will, but you really do have a point." She said: "It's just

not fair. I don't know how many other senior citizens or other people on fixed incomes realize that some of these things that are in this budget are really harmful. You don't realize them until you get to go to purchase something like that."

Calls from small and large business people in the riding too are very, very concerned. They are saying it's just a real shame that Ontario is closed for business. Just when there was some glimmer of hope that things might even be turning around, that there might be something starting, now we've got this biggest tax grab ever that is going to really put people behind the eight ball again, to say nothing of what the increased insurance policy cost is going to mean.

Mr Perruzza: I have to tell you, I get a knot in the pit of my stomach every time a Liberal stands up in this place and pontificates about competence and about honesty in projections and in budgets. To quote the member, she talked about how the role of the opposition is to look beneath, to cut through the veneer.

I have to tell you, they never read our document, because if they had, they would have figured out that there's truth in ours. But I can tell you that when you go back to theirs in 1990, go back to the spring of 1990, Nixon, the Liberal Treasurer of the time, who sat on this side of the House with all of those folks sitting right behind him, sat here and talked about a budget and talked about a surplus in Ontario of \$39 million at the end of that fiscal year. That is, in the spring of 1991 we were supposed to have, honestly speaking, if you listen to the Liberals, \$39 million in the kitty after having spent what we were going to spend. Well, the auditor tells us differently. The auditor that year put their numbers at a \$3-billion deficit; over a \$3-billion deficit. That's the auditor; that's not us.

Where was the honesty then? Where was the projection then? Where was the competence then? You know, it's fine for them to stand in their place on that side and pontificate and point the finger and lambaste, but when the truth be known and when you look at the numbers, they were wacko. Their numbers simply didn't make sense. They were wackyish.

Go back to the old documents, read the old documents, because you're not reading our budget correctly.

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): As I was listening to the speech I was being given, the negativity of it, I started getting some flashbacks. Flashbacks, when I remember back when the Liberals were on this side of the House implementing some stuff and what they did; you know, good economic times. We've seen the provincial sales tax go up, from 7% to 8%. The revenues were there. The employment was there.

I listened to her comments reflecting about this budget does nothing. This budget has done more to provide for communities and to provide for retraining

and retooling of the workforce. I remember when the Liberals were on this side of the House and we were going through the industrial revolution. We were going through a change through technology change in our workplaces. Where were the Liberals? Nowhere to be found during technology change.

When I listened to the comments about social assistance reform, I find it very amazing that when the amount of clients who were on social assistance was down, when the availability of making progressive change was there, very little was done, as a matter of fact, if anything was done, during that time frame to allow workers and people the opportunity to make the transformation from social assistance to a job, and a viable job in our community.

But I keep listening to the comments that are made today about our budget. Our budget, number one, provides for an infrastructure base, which the Liberals never did under good economic times. They talk about offloading. I remember all the offloading they did to the municipalities during good economic times, and today they act as heroes for them.

I'm looking at what this budget does for retraining and retooling our workforce. Look at what it did today. Look at what it did in good economic times: nothing. We knew they were there. We warned them before. They sit there, and I wonder if they ask themselves the serious question today: Why didn't they do something when good economic times were here, when the transformation would have been much easier than transformation would have been today?

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Ottawa-Rideau has two minutes in response.

Mrs O'Neill: The old song comes back again and they expect that it's going to haunt the Liberals. But if you want to go to real facts, the Hansard of the general government committee of April 1991 tells the story of what was going on in the summer of 1990. This is an impartial view of all three parties questioning treasury officials, and indeed, questioning members of the cabinet of our government. It certainly showed what the auditor had said: There were policy changes made, there were changes made in the economy. We were in the middle of an international war. Summer 1990 was very volatile.

Social assistance increased by almost 50% over that summer, as did personal bankruptcies. It was impossible to project; officials, financial in treasury and outside of treasury, have stated that, so to keep bringing this up shows how very empty their pot really is, and to talk to us about social assistance reform also is a distortion of the facts.

If they go back to budgets '89 and '90, we put \$1 billion into social assistance reform in this province. We made our commitments and we began. We were pres-

sured by that government to spend more and it has put everything on hold. That makes me pretty angry. Talk about us not being involved in new technology: We were the ones who started the Premier's Council, which has almost been inactive since this government took over. We also started the centres for excellence in the universities, which this government is now dismantling. Our successes, unfortunately, are being eroded by this government.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the member for Ottawa-Rideau for her participation and her response. I remind members that it is out of order to interject. You will have your turn if you want to participate.

1650

Mrs Marland: One of the frustrations that I experience now, since the Bob Rae socialist government has changed the rules for procedures in this House, is that we are limited to 30 minutes of debate. I can assure you that in 30 minutes I cannot convey to this House or the people watching and listening all the material that has been submitted to me by the people in this province, and in particular by the residents of Mississauga, the region of Peel.

One of the things that always happens when we stand in this Legislature and debate the budget, of course, is that everyone says we're being purely partisan. Naturally, an opposition member is going to stand in his or her place and criticize the budget and be perceived to be criticizing it because he or she is in opposition and it's a partisan motive. Well, I've decided to take a different tack. This is actually the eighth consecutive year that I have stood in this House to debate a provincial government budget and, rather than give my own viewpoint, I have decided to give some of the opinions and express some of the concerns that have been given to me directly, and some of them indirectly, through reports in our local newspapers and in press releases from the city of Mississauga and indeed from the region of Peel. I hope that when I have done that much, I will be able to get around to still having some time left to discuss the very important subject of non-profit housing programs versus direct shelter subsidies to people who need help with their rent, to pay for their accommodation.

I'm going to say at the outset that this New Democratic Party that is now the government always proclaimed when it was in opposition that it was the protector of the poor. They were the only party who cared about people on fixed incomes, the lower- and middle-income earners in this province. As they would stand and spout forth on many public platforms around this province, they were really the only party that cared about people. I think anyone who has a copy of the Agenda for People, on which this Bob Rae government campaigned in the summer of 1990, will know now that every single promise it campaigned on has been

reversed, ignored or not acted upon.

This past week, when the Legislature wasn't sitting and we had what is known as constituency week, I spent three of the five days travelling this province with the Team Harris vehicle, which was travelling I think to almost 30 different locations all over Ontario to ask the public what its feelings were about this Bob Rae NDP budget. It was a very, very interesting experience, because when you're standing on a street corner—we weren't going up and knocking on doors; we were simply greeting the public out on the streets, or in one case, at GO stations and in another case in some parking lots.

It's amazing, when you stand there and do that, how the reaction of people, first of all, is that they don't know what this pamphlet is that you're wanting to hand to them. Of course, people are a little apprehensive; they don't know who you are and whether you're going to ask them to answer a whole lot of questions or make some kind of commitment to some kind of organization. So it's actually quite different than when you're campaigning, because at least when you're campaigning, you're saying: "I'm Margaret Marland. I would appreciate your support in the election," and it's sort of two direct statements one after the other.

What we were doing was saying to the public: "Do you have anything you wish to express about the Ontario NDP government budget? Do you wish to make any comments on that budget?" People at first would hesitate to take the pamphlet that we offered, and then some would sort of shyly take it and walk away slowly. I want to tell you the number of times that people would walk away, start reading it, turn right around and come back and say: "Can you give me half a dozen of those? Is it okay if I copy this and circulate it around the plant where I work?" or the office where they worked or the store where they worked. "Can I give this to my family and my relatives and friends?"

When people started to read what it was that we were circulating, their immediate reaction was, once they knew what it was, "Yes, I do want to send a message to Premier Bob Rae." Earlier today in members' statements, which is already on record in Hansard, I quoted some of the statements that some of the people made to me about this Ontario budget. I won't repeat those statements now, but those were not partisan statements. They were not my words; they were words of the public in this province.

Continuing in that vein now, I want to use some other people's words who aren't affiliated with any political party and, in some cases, humorously enough, I would say least of all our Progressive Conservative Party.

I perhaps would like to read, first of all, just a couple of paragraphs from Brian Costello's column in the Hamilton Spectator of May 20, 1993. The headline in

this column is, "Seniors, Middle Incomes Hit." Brian Costello is saying about the Ontario budget:

"In reality, it hits middle income and seniors more than anybody else. The Treasurer may say that it taxes the rich, but the rich will not pay it."

He goes on in another paragraph to say:

"The middle-income family is going to be destroyed by the myriad of other tax increases in the budget. The rich will have the wherewithal to protect themselves, the middle-income individuals won't be able to defend themselves and as a result will pay...."

"Seniors who often live on a fixed income won't have budgeted for these increased expenditures. Their standard of living will be hurt worse than all."

This is a journalist who is looking at the Ontario budget objectively and trying to interpret what the impact will be on the people of this province. I commend Mr Costello for his frankness and his research and interpretation of the budget.

We always talk about the impact that provincial budgets have on our school boards, and certainly the two school boards in the region of Peel have been hurting for a very long time. I want to read into the record a quote from Tom Reilly, who is the director of education for the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board.

"I understand the government's rationale in terms of deficit reduction, yet there have been repeated blows to the same people. Clearly, there has been downloading on to the boards. I am concerned that the tax on insurance premiums will hit this board hard. The increase of personal taxation will hit a large number of employees at the same time as they are being asked to have their salaries rolled back."

The next quote is from Mike Roy, who is the treasurer-controller of the Peel Board of Education. The Peel Board of Education, incidentally, is the largest public school board in Canada. His quote is as follows:

"The major impact of this budget is the tax on group insurance benefits. It is estimated that for 1993 the costs will be between \$600,000 and \$900,000 and for 1994 \$1.5 million. These are funds that have not been budgeted and consequently will become part of the local ratepayer's responsibility."

1700

I think that's the whole point, that when you don't fund, through transfer payments, the local school boards and the municipalities, they have nowhere else to go but into the taxpayer's pocket—the taxpayer's pocket, which is already paying all the \$2 billion worth of other tax increases, not the least of which, of course, is their personal income tax.

Another comment I want to read is from Joanne Nugent, who is with Community Living Mississauga. Before I read this comment, I want to remind the people

in this Legislature today of the tremendous rally that was out here on the front lawn at Queen's Park last fall. You will remember that we had over 4,000 people who came here to say, "Please do not cut programs to people with special needs, both children and adults." Community Living Mississauga was very well represented at that particular rally demonstration.

Joanne Nugent:

"I am concerned about the ramifications of the budget and the taxing of insurance benefits. These taxes represent another amount of money that we don't have. Our budget is already stretched to the limit, we can't afford another \$8,000 to \$9,000 in taxes on insurance benefits. In the meantime, we're still waiting to hear about the results of the social contract talks."

"Last week we received a considerable sum of money for pay equity despite the fact that we hadn't requested it. While the money was nice, we don't see it as a priority and it doesn't make sense when the social contract may result in salary cuts or staff cuts. It's odd that one week we received a huge amount of money for pay equity and the next week we're involved in social contract talks. It is difficult for social service agencies to deal with this schizophrenic behaviour. Where is the overall planning? I feel that there is a ship going down the river with no one steering—and it's heading towards Niagara Falls! We're experiencing a climate of uncertainty and fear—just imagine what our families and recipients are feeling!"

Barbara Thornber is executive director of the Ontario Association for Community Living and I want to place her comments on the record following Community Living Mississauga:

"Our key concern is what assurance will the government give us that there won't be future surprises. If we manage to reach an agreement for a social contract, will the government agree to no new cuts in the upcoming budgets? We're concerned about what may come down in the budget of 1994. We feel we're being hit from so many different directions. There are many things in the expenditure control plan which will affect us, now we have the budget and a possible social contract."

"We already have to reduce our budget, now we have to absorb a tax on insurance premiums."

Of course, a name that needs no introduction in this House is the name of the mayor of the city of Mississauga, Mayor Hazel McCallion. She says:

"We have been hit with reducing the unconditional grants, we have been hit with the social contract and we have been hit with the budget. We have adopted our (municipal) budget for 1993 and we are five months into it. Three strikes and we're out. What effect will insurance premiums have, auto insurance for our buses, trucks and cars?"

A further quote of Mayor McCallion's is as follows:

"No one can argue with deficit reduction,' said Mayor Hazel McCallion. 'But we are concerned that the province is trying to impose this on us after we've passed our 1993 budgets. We're also concerned that every municipality is going to be forced to use the same measures regardless of individual circumstances. This might work for some municipalities but doesn't work for Mississauga where we're already lean and mean. We can't reduce our staff levels further without lessening services to residents,' the mayor added."

I want to emphasize that all of these quotes are from people in the community who are speaking from the base of being responsible to the residents whom they serve. It has nothing to do with an opposition PC member standing in this House making partisan comments.

I also want to quote from the treasurer and commissioner of finance for the regional municipality of Peel, Louise Eason. Ms Eason says as follows:

"There are three main components of the provincial government's fiscal plan which will have an impact on the region of Peel. First, the expenditure control plan will result in an annual revenue loss of \$4.2 million. Second, the social contract will have an impact of approximately \$10 million. Third, the implications from broadening the sales tax are: a minimum of \$600,000 a year and potentially several million dollars over the region's five-year capital plan as a result of the application of sales tax to aggregates"—for example—"stone, dirt etc."

That comment I just read was, as I said, from the treasurer and the commissioner of finance.

I also want to read a couple of quotes from the CAO, the chief administrative officer, of the region of Peel, Michael Garrett. Michael Garrett is quoted in a column by John Stewart, who is a staff reporter, in the Mississauga News on Thursday, May 20. I quote as follows:

"The expenditure control program for the ministries is predominantly cuts to proposed programs, but the cuts to us are real, live programs,' Peel chief administrative officer Michael Garrett told politicians Thursday.

"In a hard-hitting message to politicians, Garrett—who has been at the social contract negotiating table on behalf of Ontario's regional governments—said municipalities should be outraged that the burden of the provincial deficit, built up over the last three years through the Ontario government's mismanagement, should be passed on to local property taxpayers.

"The NDP has to cut to the chase and make fundamental changes in its major programs (health, education and social services) before municipalities will believe it is serious about cost reductions,' added the CAO."

Again, this is a staff person at the region of Peel. Mr Garrett really knows what's going on and he has no

reason to make a partisan political statement. He's just concerned about how he's going to manage the region of Peel with the kind of funding and the kinds of cuts that this Bob Rae socialist government is forcing him into.

1710

Also speaking on behalf of the region of Peel, I have some quotes attributable to the regional chairman, Emil Kolb. These are quotes from a press release dated May 18 from the region of Peel. It says:

"It's time for the residents of Peel to tell Bob Rae that the property tax well is dry and he had better work with municipalities to find new alternatives to fighting the deficit, because our taxpayers aren't prepared to do all the sacrificing, says Peel Regional Chairman Emil Kolb.

"It is time Peel taxpayers made their own statement that they are not prepared to see private and public sector jobs disappear and have to endure city and regional government service cuts and tax hikes while the province continuously refuses to reform costly universal programs,' Kolb said."

A further quote:

"Premier Rae's plan to siphon billions from property taxpayers, instead of reforming health, education and social service programs, means municipalities are being used to fight a problem with no solution,' Kolb added.

"Residents need to be aware that this is not just intergovernmental squabbling. Talented people from municipalities including Peel which have been balancing their books for years are ready to work together on a plan to tackle the deficit in a fair manner. Mr Rae just has to ask for help in drafting a plan that is fair to everyone."

A final paragraph from this news release reads as follows:

"During the last three years, Peel regional council worked diligently to control its expenditures despite unprecedented demand on social programs. Reacting responsibly to these pressures, council has held expenditures in virtually all regional programs to 1991 funding levels. This corporation has been forced to lay off employees and make critical decisions on key service levels in order to minimize the burden on property taxpayers.

"It will be difficult, after so many tough decisions during the recession, to watch the province dig into the property tax base as it goes from years of wild spending to panicked restraint,' said Kolb."

Pretty powerful statements from the chairman of the region of Peel. He is very concerned.

Another area in the municipal level that is also of course really concerned about the impact of this budget and their ability to deliver a service is our two hospitals. I want to just read two or three quotes from the presi-

dent of the Mississauga Hospital, Merritt Henderson.

"In the complicated world of transfer payments, Mississauga Hospital President Merritt Henderson says that the 2% for next year really translates to a 0.5% local increase....

"Hospitals are particularly vulnerable to cutbacks in transfers since they rely on provincial grants for about 85% of their revenues. 'The universities can raise tuition fees and the municipalities can raise property taxes, even though that is unpalatable, but we can't really do anything because user fees are not acceptable,' points out Henderson."

I'm reading from a column in the Mississauga News, dated December 6, 1992, written by John Stewart.

Another paragraph reads:

"Since the hospitals have done so well with restraint, 'from their perspective it makes sense to keep ratcheting us down a little more,' says Henderson. 'The problem is that we're getting close to the level of safety.'"

"There are increasing backups in the emergency ward and every day starts with an effort to find beds for those in emergency who didn't get one the night before. The hospital has already had layoffs and made most of the internal efficiencies possible.

"Our objective is not to reduce services or lay off staff,' as a result of the grant constraints, adds Henderson, noting that hospital workers will likely be asked to look at trading off salary increases in order to keep jobs."

Our other Mississauga hospital, the Credit Valley Hospital, its president, Dean Sane, in the same article says:

"There will be an impact on the entire hospital....

"For the public it's going to mean increased waiting time, longer waiting lists and more frustration for everybody,' adds Sane. Just a few months ago, Credit Valley learned that its hopes of getting a 104-bed expansion were being put on hold by Ontario. That means that the increased city population will have to be serviced by the same number of beds for several more years."

That's the health care impact, just as an example.

I've had many, many letters from residents and constituents in my riding, but I just want to read one paragraph of this letter over the signature of John and Wendy Davies, who live on Bobolink Road.

"The time is long overdue for governments to be held accountable to the taxpayers for their actions. In this respect your government has failed miserably. To avoid a repercussion of a similar disaster occurring in the future, I suggest you impose maximum limits on expenditures, and like any responsible organization, you commit yourselves to managing your affairs within the limits of the budget."

This letter is addressed to the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Floyd Laughren.

Mr Speaker, I'm down to my last two and a half minutes, and as I said at the beginning of my comments this afternoon, I chose to use other people's critiques of this Ontario socialist government budget, and when you read what the public are saying, it's very hard to understand why this government isn't listening. I don't know why they can't hear the comments from other people in the government, the other people in the public sector.

Right now in this House I think there is actually only one government member in the House at this time who served in opposition. Everyone else in the House at this moment was elected in 1990, so they do not know what it was like when we were in opposition with these members, who were screaming and yelling at the top of their lungs about every single budget of the Liberal government and what was wrong with those budgets and why they were concerned about those decisions. A lot happens in this distance, and I suppose it may be about 12 feet, the distance between this side of the House and that side of the House. It seems that a lot happened to the New Democratic Party members when they walked this 12 feet across the floor of the House and took their seats on the government side, and the result is devastating for the people of this province.

Unfortunately, I have not had an opportunity to talk about the housing program. The non-profit housing program has to be one of the biggest scams that exists in Ontario today. It didn't start out that way. When non-profit housing was established in the early 1970s, it was an alternative to affordable housing, but unfortunately it is now being so mismanaged by this Housing minister that when the Provincial Auditor asked her deputy minister for figures about what the non-profit housing program was costing in this province, the answer the auditor got was, "I can tell you in November," eight months from the time of the original question.

1720

Mr Perruzza: I just want to go very briefly back to a comment that the member made during her speech. She talked about when the NDP was in opposition and how we profess to be the only party that essentially spoke for poor people, and then she went on to describe a litany of areas where we have failed etc.

Mr Speaker, I tell you, because I know you're a fairminded member in this Legislature, that the role of the opposition is to criticize and so on and they don't have to make decisions; that's the difference, they don't have to make decisions.

I want to quote back from Hansard what a Conservative colleague of the member from Mississauga said only a few days ago about poor people. Poor people is a very broad group. You have people on workers' compensation; by and large, they're poor. You have

social assistance recipients. You have working poor. There are a lot of poor people, but I'm going to speak about just one little group that her Conservative friend spoke about only a few days ago, and here's what they would do when it comes to making a decision with respect to poor people. I quote, "Follow the lead of New Brunswick and Manitoba and reduce benefit levels and streamline administrative services."

That's what you would do. Take a group of poor people and make them poorer, reduce their benefits. That's what they would do and they're not alone because I have my Conservative friend—my Liberal friend there from Mississauga who, and I quote, says, "Having talked to injured workers, they would support this resolution. I support the Conservative member: Reduce poor people's benefits." That's how you deal with poor people.

We don't have a monopoly on this issue, but if the facts be known, look at the record. They're seeing it all the time in this place and that's how they would deal with it, with poor people: Make them poorer.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I'd like to congratulate the member for Mississauga South for her thoughtful comments with respect to this devastating budget.

Two specific remarks I'd like to add to her thoughts: One is with respect to the latter comment that she raised on the issue of non-profit housing. I think what we're concerned with is that the process for solving the housing problem now has to do with the fact that there are waiting lists all over the place. To talk about the member who last spoke, there are poor people in this province, there are single mothers, there are seniors who aren't able to get into housing projects because of the long waiting lists.

That fact alone—talking about the dollars-and-cents issue is one thing, but talking about the fact that your system is not working—there are waiting lists that are unbelievable throughout this province. Your system isn't working. That's adding to the comments that have been made by the member for Mississauga South. The fact is that there's really going to be \$1 billion per year spent in costs with respect to the whole subject of non-profit housing. You're going to have to have another look at it.

I know you've made promises from day one on this subject, but it's not working. Your deputy minister came to the public accounts committee and he doesn't know what's going on. He simply didn't have the facts to rebut the comments that were made by the Provincial Auditor making very serious allegations against the whole topic of non-profit housing.

I think the member for Mississauga South, on that one point alone—because if you ask what, for example, our government would do, that is one thing we would

do: We would reduce the waste. We stand for shelter allowances. We want to help the poor people in this province. There are all kinds of poor people who are not being properly housed in this province because of your policy. Your policy stinks. You need to have another look at it and the member from Mississauga is quite right and so is the Provincial Auditor quite right. The waste all over this place is just terrible and you should review that whole subject.

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I'd like to comment about the member for Mississauga South in respect to her comments today related to the latest NDP budget. I simply want to say that in the past week we've had what is described as a constituency week. The House did not sit and members of the Legislature supposedly went back to their ridings to talk to their constituents, to deal with their constituents and their problems and get their feedback.

I'm not sure how many members did that. I know some members take advantage of that opportunity to perhaps go to sunnier climes and others to do a variety of things other than speak to their constituents.

I want to say the member for Mississauga South in her comments today is speaking from the heart in terms of the travels she made across this province. She was one of the most active members of the Conservative caucus who did not take time off, who did not go on vacation, who really took advantage of this opportunity to travel the province, give people an opportunity to have input and also to listen to their concerns about the finances of this province.

The member for Mississauga South travelled throughout her own area as well as many communities in eastern Ontario. I know that for a fact because I was able to join her briefly. So she's speaking from the heart today, she's speaking about real concerns of real people in this province and she doesn't merit the kind of comment that came from NDP members.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I also heard from many constituents in my riding and throughout my region, and I was struck when the member talked of the kind of input she had heard, because what I heard, what I heard from the people in Whitby and Oshawa, were very sensible responses.

They know that we are faced with very difficult choices, very difficult decisions in front of us. They know that there's an attempt to be fair, an attempt to deal by reducing deficits, by a three-pronged attack, an attack which involves cutting services—some very difficult decisions, decisions that in my area are felt very acutely because of cutbacks in GO train services. People acknowledge that those cuts may be necessary, but they don't want to see them happen. Public sector workers in my area are very concerned about "How can we deal with this social contract?" and of course the revenue increases.

But what I hear time and again is not, "Oh, the taxes are terrible and you should have taken more out of this or more out of that." What I hear from people is that they're seeing the real issues that we're dealing with, not just one aspect of it alone, as if somehow the other prongs of this attack were not there. They see the problems of the deficit. They see those cuts, those very serious attempts to reduce the costs of government, to make it more effective.

No one wants increases in taxes. No one wants to receive less income than they had previously. But they see that these are very important, very serious decisions, and I think it's denigrating to the people of Ontario to indicate that they are so simplistic in their vision as not to see that whole and balanced picture.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. This completes questions and/or comments. The honourable member for Mississauga South has two minutes in response.

Mrs Marland: I want to express my appreciation to the member for Leeds-Grenville for his generous comments. We did work together in eastern Ontario and we did hear what the people were saying to us. I feel very sorry for the member for Durham Centre because we also—I wasn't personally, but we did have our members; certainly I think Mr Turnbull and Mr Johnson were in Oshawa, and they didn't hear what the member for Durham Centre is saying. If it wasn't so serious, it's almost pathetic to hear what he's saying today.

I just want to say this in closing because, again, of the time limitation. We can't tell the people that we're really looking after them to the maximum of our ability when we, in a non-profit housing program, subsidize those people on average—and these are figures that we've been able to procure finally. On average, the subsidy is \$854 in a non-profit housing program. Some of them are \$2,000-a-month subsidy or \$2,400-a-month subsidy, but on average we're talking about an \$854-a-month subsidy.

The other aspect of this that is really interesting is that under a shelter subsidy, a direct subsidy to the person who is eligible for that help and needs that help—the people we want to help—the average is \$354. So we're talking about a differential of \$500 a month. We could look after two more families for the difference between the costs of non-profit programs, where the government builds and owns the buildings, versus where we give people a cheque and say: "You go and choose where you want to live. You don't have to live in a government housing program. You can live close to your work, close to your babysitter, close to your family." We want to give people the money so they have the options and they can choose.

1730

Mr Peter North (Elgin): It's certainly a pleasure for me to get up today and speak for a short time on the provincial budget.

This is a budget that, for me, was a chance to go out and talk to some people in the past week, and I found that, quite frankly, I've heard it all, from one end of the gamut to the other. There have been so many different opinions that have been voiced to me that it's hard to put across, I think, to the people who are in the Legislature today and to the people who are out there today, to formulate an opinion of what they perceive the budget to be completely.

We've tried, I think, through the information that was in the budget and through the incentives that we've worked on for over a year now, to put across to people that we're trying to get the house in order, so to speak. One thing that I do recall people saying to me now for over a year is: "You have got to get the house in order. You've got to make the changes. You've got to work on curbing the spending and you've got to do things that will get that deficit down."

On the flip side, those people have now said to me: "But don't do it to me. We appreciate the fact that you're headed in the right direction"—and in a very public sort of way have said to me—"but don't do it to me." In a private sort of way, they've said: "You've got to keep working at it. You've got to keep going. You've got to get this deficit down. You've got to take the steps that you've talked about and continue to work on this particular economic package you've been working on."

There are three main parts that the Treasurer or Minister of Finance tried to put forward. I think he was trying to set the record straight, so to speak, as to what it was we were trying to do. The first part was expenditure control, the second piece was the social contract, and the third piece was revenue generation. One is not, I think, in this particular situation, good without the other. I think the three together create the sense out there that this is something we're trying to balance, that we're trying to spread, across as broad a public as can possibly be, to create a sense of fairness, a sense of equity and a sense of balance.

That perception certainly has come across, to me, and that perception certainly has been opposed and voiced to me very clearly. We've tried to, I think, suggest to people that we are looking towards the future and that this isn't something that's just a shot against people or a shot in the arm for the economy. It is an approach that will take some time, I think, to analyse, will take some time, I think, to play out, so to speak, and will take some time, I think, to have people realize that there is value in trying to set an economic course that is based on now but also based on the future.

We've had an opportunity now to write three budgets, but I would suggest that no one whom I've seen—I had a small business and was very fortunate to work in this province for a number of years—no one, I think, can write a perfect budget that everyone will agree with. There are criticisms and support for each and every

budget that's come out in this province, and I've criticized and supported my fair share of them. A lot of times, I have to say honestly, it depended a lot on how it affected me. I took a very closed view, let's say, of what the total package was and if there were some values in there that perhaps affected me but were more towards supporting of people who in that particular case were perhaps less fortunate than I was.

We've spent a lot of time discussing, defending, supporting, distributing information on something that we call Jobs Ontario. There are a lot of different pieces to Jobs Ontario. One of the centrepieces that we've tried to put forward that's been extremely criticized and highly criticized by members of the opposition, by the Leader of the Opposition, is the Jobs Ontario package. We've tried to give people and communities across the province an opportunity to be employed. We've tried to give people who are in the business sector an opportunity to advance the cause of training in this province through a partnership with the government, we feel, through a partnership with business.

Perhaps, as people have said in the criticisms that have come across the floor, the approach is not right or there isn't the balance that they would wish there was, but the fact of the matter is that we've tried to create an atmosphere that lends itself, through this particular program, to training in this province. We find it a real problem, we find it a real need and we think it's something that needs to be sufficiently addressed. That is something we're trying to do.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): It's not working.

Mr North: The member across the floor says it's not working. I can tell him that I had a discussion last week with people in my particular area, the beautiful riding of Elgin, the county of Elgin, which is such a tremendous home for me and my family, and they told me that in fact it is working. If we were talking about the tortoise and the hare, perhaps it's not the hare—at this point it may well be the tortoise—but I remember how that story goes and it seems to me that as the story ends, there was value in what the tortoise was doing.

In this particular case, it's paying off; it actually is. I cannot measure the jobs that we're getting in Elgin county in hundreds or thousands at this point, but I can measure the jobs that we're getting in Elgin county as good, substantial jobs.

I never said, when I talked to people about Jobs Ontario, that this was going to turn Elgin county's employment record around in days. What I did say was that there was a hope and a vision that we would be creating good, substantial jobs, well-paying jobs, that would lead to further employment in the future.

I think we've created that atmosphere and I think we've created those partnerships in Elgin county. I find

that the jobs that are being created are being created by the private sector in partnership with the government and are good, substantial jobs.

The second thing I wanted to talk about was Jobs Ontario Capital, because I feel, coming from a construction background, that an investment in infrastructure is one of the most substantial investments you can make in your town, your village, your province or your country. An investment in infrastructure (a) creates tremendous employment, (b) creates lasting commitment and investment to a community and (c) I think opens doors and gateways for that community to all different sorts of economic stimulus.

Those types of things, certainly in Elgin county, are very readily accepted. As a matter of fact, they have been readily accepted in Elgin county in the past two and a half years and in the years previous to that. We've had tremendous growth in investment in infrastructure that is giving us all types of economic opportunities, whether it's through roads, hospitals, schools, everything that you can think of. I believe that in Elgin county's particular situation, we'll benefit from this greatly.

The third piece I wanted to talk about was the social contract, because I know this is a difficult situation. It's a difficult situation for people on all sides to deal with, and even for the people who stand as observers to the process.

The municipalities say that the timing is out, that they don't enjoy the process, that we should have done this a different way, that it should have happened sooner and that they've set their budgets and this isn't going to be a good process for them. Because they're going to have to face it, they're going to penalize the provincial government, they're going to put up the "Bob Rae tax," they're going to do this, they're going to do that, they're going to do the other thing.

In the end, if we can work ourselves into a situation where we can get an agreement with our partners and the government, I think we'll have laid some groundwork for a better relationship for the employees of this province and the broader public sector. I think if we can do that, it will certainly benefit everyone who's a part of this process.

The thing I find about this agreement is the fact that this is an experience where we have the government and the bargaining agents, the people who are under contract to the government in the broader public sector, sitting at a table deciding together, setting a plan together, an agenda together. I think if you can extend that decision-making process to the very people who need to be a part of the savings, the \$2 billion we're trying to save, I think you will have a better process. I agree with what we're trying to do and I hope very strongly—I'm very committed to the idea that I hope this works because I think it will be something that will benefit this province.

1740

The next thing that I wanted to speak of, and this is one that I know is dear to everyone's heart, is the revenue generation side. There's been tremendous discussion about revenue generation, and the basic simple fact, the quote that everyone uses, is taxes, and they're going up. Well, I don't think that's anything new in this province. It's happened before a number of times, and it's something that you have to decide if you're going to—the question, I don't think, is, are the taxes going up, but are you getting value for your dollar and what are you getting for your taxes? That's the discussion that I think people need to have in a broader way, because the discussion now as it stands is just, "The taxes are going up, business will be leaving, and that's the end of this ball game." But I don't think so. I think there's much more to it than that.

I think that you have to decide for yourself. If you're in this province and you live in this province and you want to have the services that are available in this province that are not available in other jurisdictions, then someone has to pay for them, and in this particular situation, as a person who works and lives in this province, I have to pay for them. I've had to pay for them for a long time and I'll have to pay for them for a long time yet.

The fact of the matter is, I enjoy the services that we get, and I know that there are people out there who need those services much more than I do, and I want those services to be sustained, so I'm willing to pay, and that's the bottom line with taxes: Are you or are you not willing to pay for the services you get, value for the dollar you spend?

The last thing that I wanted to talk about was the approach that I've witnessed in the House to the budget and the approach that I've witnessed outside the House to the budget. There has been tremendous discussion—today, as a matter of fact—about the budget. There were some good speeches that I heard made by the leaders of the two opposition parties, who talked about the budget. There have been good speeches that have been made by members talking about the budget.

The fact of the matter is that through it all, and I've listened very closely, not one suggestion today have I heard on the budget. I have heard very clearly criticisms. I have heard very clearly criticisms that were addressed to me from other people. That's fine. You can look in the Hansard; you can see for yourself. It's been criticisms, but not suggestions. The Hansard will bear out what I'm saying.

The member from Ottawa-Rideau said this is a deplorable breach of trust. It's a budget. It's a budget, as there have been budgets in the past. It's not a deplorable breach of trust. It's a group of people who have put together a budget for an economy of the province of

Ontario and have done what they feel is the best they can do in the situation that we're in.

We've got to look at how we do this in the future. We've got to look at the process, we've got to understand the process and we've got to try and make the process better.

We've got all kinds of people—I could tell you about friends of mine, Gary Remeer, who lives very close to me and has a small business and says to me: "Get it under control. Get on with it. Get the process through and keep moving. Set a budget, set an agenda and keep moving." There's a gentleman who has a business. He doesn't see this as sort of an anti-capitalist creed. He doesn't say this is some sort of province that's closed for business. As a matter of fact, his business is better than it was before because he works very hard at it.

So I don't see it in the same way you do, and I understand the criticisms and that's how this House works. From what I've been told in Elgin county, the biggest waste of money is this House itself. I mean, people at home have said to me, "This is terrible that you should spend the money you do here."

Mrs Marland: Peter, I wasn't quoting this House; I was quoting people outside this House.

Mr North: Right, and I'm going to get to those very statements you made. I feel very strongly that I need to address that, and I do. The last thing I wanted to say is very much to that point that you made. You said that there were a number of people in Peel region who felt very terrible about the way this budget had come out and that it was going to do dramatic things to that part of the province. I say to the member who brought those points forward, how do they feel about the federal level? I mean, they must know that these dollars transfer down and they must know that these dollars have not transferred down. I don't know how they feel about \$8 billion or \$9 billion or \$10 billion not coming to the province and therefore not coming down.

I mean, everyone says, "You've just shifted the blame," and all of that. Well, we haven't tried to do that. For two years we've tried to do it a different way. The fact of the matter is that obviously in the case of the chief administrative officers and the people she's mentioned, they don't seem to feel the same way about fiscal federal transfers as they do about provincial transfers. I guess they must not feel the federal fiscal transfers not coming down the same way they feel the provincial fiscal transfer not coming down.

I guess it must be the province's fault in their eyes, and they may very well think that, but I think that you should suggest to them that there's a way of looking at this from another point of view.

I think the last thing I'll say is that I support the direction we've taken. I hope we can solve the social contract issue, because I think that's a positive step for

the province. I support the Jobs Ontario program and I support the work the Treasurer has done. I thank you for your time.

Mr Curling: I also want to make a comment on my colleague from Elgin. As I listen to him I believe that he really believes what he's saying. He said things are just booming up in his community, saying that Jobs Ontario has really been targeted and is really working in his area.

It seems to me then that Jobs Ontario is only targeted in your area, because in the other areas it's not working. I'm going to ask you to visit places, like the YMCA, which is trying to get Jobs Ontario going, and the Tropicana organization, which is trying to get Jobs Ontario going. It's not working. I would say to him, if you want to be realistic, start looking at it in a way that it will help the people it was targeted for.

Now, quickly, the other party talks about taxes. You keep criticizing the Liberals for raising taxes 33 times in the time that they were in power. They have raised it—how much did you say?—20-odd times.

Mr Hope: He didn't mention that.

Mr Curling: You didn't mention it, but I want you to mention that. That's what I want to say to you in my comments, that he has left out those areas that they have. Look at two and a half years of raised taxes. They say that's good.

This time in our economy we don't need to raise taxes. The people have been taxed too much and the fact is that you have actually—at an average income for a family of four with \$50,000; they are now paying \$330 to this government for more taxes.

Mr North: Seven dollars a week.

Mr Curling: He said \$7 a week. You know what that means to a family that is poor, seven bucks a week? He says that's all it is. But the accumulative amount is \$330. I could not forget that.

1750

Mr Tilson: I'd like to respond to one item with respect to the member from Elgin. He commented, and it seems to be a theme that's developing through all of the government members, that this budget is one of fairness. I must say that my observations in talking to people around this province are that it's most unfair.

I guess the question is, how much can we be taxed as a society? One of the items you must look at, we all must look at, is the subject of tax freedom day. That's the day, as you know, member from Elgin, that we stop handing over our paycheque to the tax man and get to keep our earnings. Last year in the province of Ontario, tax freedom day was June 25. With this budget, it has to be well into July. Can you imagine?

Mr Hope: Oh, come on.

Mr Tilson: Well, let's look at the facts. The facts

are that it's going to be well into July before you're going to put any money into your pocket. In the United States, tax freedom day last year fell on May 2. In the highest-taxed state, which I believe was New York, I believe it fell on May 25. So the people of this province are saying quite the contrary, and you've said it in the past. "Enough's enough. How high can our taxes go? Are we going to pretty soon be donating all of our paycheque to the government?"

It's not a fair tax, all of these taxes that are being mentioned. We can't sustain any more tax if we're going to encourage investment from other countries, other provinces. This province is the highest-taxed province in North America, and it has to stop.

I would like the member for Elgin to comment on the subject of tax freedom day now being in July.

Mr Hope: I'd like to focus my comments on some of the comments my colleague from Elgin made when he made reference to rural Ontario. He made emphasis to Jobs Ontario, and I know alone I share this glory with my colleague from Essex-Kent, where we've created over 375 jobs since its inception in September 1992. So I guess we do things much better in rural Ontario than the large centres, because when my colleague from Elgin mentioned about some of the concerns we heard, it's how fiscally responsible rural Ontario municipalities have been versus the larger centres and larger school boards that have consistently gone out there and just spent all kinds of money, knowing that their friends here in Toronto were just dishing it out.

But we in rural Ontario have been able to make sure that we've been living fiscally responsibly within our means. I think that's very important, because if we talk about the infrastructures of rural Ontario—I know my colleague led to it—it is very important for some of us, for our arenas, which are centrepieces of a lot of our small communities, and this is important for us to help develop that infrastructure.

I know alone on my own, dealing with Dover and Bothwell, Dover and Bothwell needed water. For years they had to apply to other governments. No money. This money was coming to them to help them with their infrastructure, to provide their citizens with clean water.

I just had the pleasure the other day. The Minister of Transportation who was over there—I wish he would listen to what I was going to say, because the Minister of Transportation just helped my community in Chatham township and in Dover township with some capital initiatives that are going to make that community more effective, and I compliment the Minister of Transportation for that effort, because it is helping.

So with my colleague from Elgin's comments, we understand what fiscal responsibility is in rural Ontario. I'm sure that's exactly what my colleague from Elgin is

trying to express. I wish the Liberals and Tories who keep saying that Jobs Ontario doesn't work would ask the question why your leader and your deputy leader were in Chatham trying to find out how Jobs Ontario actually works in the province of Ontario.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): The member opposite spoke about fiscal responsibility, and I'd like to take this opportunity to ask him if he thinks that it's fiscally responsible to take a triple A credit rating and have it downgraded twice. Does he think it's fiscally responsible to take a balanced operating budget and turn that into a deficit in the first year alone of \$3 billion, \$10 billion the second year and now we have a structural deficit of \$10 billion?

Does he think it's fiscally responsible to raise wages at the beginning of a recession and then try to take it back two and a half years later when you realize what the rest of the world has been telling you, which is, "You simply can't afford to do that"?

Does he think it's fiscally responsible and fair to say to people at a time when they are struggling to pay the mortgages on their houses, when they'd really like to buy a new car, which might help the province's economy get going, "We're going to take more taxes out of your pocket at the same time as you're worried about losing your job, at the same time as you're worried about how you're going to provide for your family"?

Is it fair for the Treasurer, two years in a row, to hit personal income tax, and further, does the member think it is fair to say: "We're going to take that tax retroactively. We're going to double the increase. We're going to say it is a 3% increase when in fact it is a 6% increase for the rest of this year"?

I would say to the member that it's important to stand in this House and talk about what fiscal responsibility is and what fairness is. I don't believe that fairness is attempting to achieve the lowest common denominator, and I don't think that fairness is telling people one thing and doing the opposite.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The member for Elgin has two minutes in response.

Mr North: I appreciate that, Mr Speaker, because it is a pleasure to have an opportunity, especially after I got a lecture from the other side just now about what's fair and what's fiscally responsible and everything else.

As you recall, before I was in this place, I was in business for myself, and I lived through three years of Liberal—

Hon Allan Pilkey (Minister without Portfolio in Municipal Affairs): Terror.

Interjections.

Mr North: Problems. I can't use the word, Mr Speaker. I can't use the word.

But I'll tell you one thing: I lived through it. I lived through it because I had enough gumption to keep working despite the problems that I faced after tax after tax after tax on small business. You talk to me about fairness, you talk to me about equity, when I had nine people and it ends up I can only employ three people.

All of these good taxes that these people did bring in, whom did they benefit? They benefited no one, because they could not be sustained in the period that did not experience growth the way that we experienced it in the time that they were the government. They were not sustainable taxes. They were brought in at a time, they were put on business at a time, when they could not handle what was there. As soon as we dropped into a period when we did not sustain the growth that was there before, they were gone.

I'll tell you one thing, Mr Speaker; I will make one thing clear in this House today. The one thing that we didn't do is we didn't make a big promise about lowering a sales tax two weeks before the election and run away from a problem that was in this province. We're still here today, we're going to be here tomorrow, we're going to face this thing, and we are going to fix it. That's what we're here for, and that's what we're going to do.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Scarborough North on a point of—

Mr Curling: A point of order. Considering that it's just about three minutes before 6 o'clock and we are next to speak, I would ask that the House be adjourned.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent? Agreed.

It now being very near 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, June 1, at 1:30.

The House adjourned at 1758.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor/Lieutenant-gouverneur: Lt Col The Hon/L'hon Henry N.R. Jackman CM, KStJ, BA, LLB, LLD

Speaker/Président: Hon/L'hon David Warner

Clerk/Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees/Greffière adjointe et Greffière des comités: Deborah Deller

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals/Greffier adjoint et Greffier des journaux: Alex D. McFedries

Sergeant at Arms/Sergent d'armes: Thomas Stelling

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Algoma	Wildman, Hon/L'hon Bud	ND	Minister of Environment and Energy, minister responsible for native affairs / ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A.	L	
Beaches-Woodbine	Lankin, Hon/L'hon Frances	ND	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Brampton North/-Nord	McClelland, Carman	L	
Brampton South/-Sud	Callahan, Robert V.	L	
Brant-Haldimand	Eddy, Ron	L	
Brantford	Ward, Hon/L'hon Brad	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Finance / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Finances
Bruce	Elston, Murray J.	L	
Burlington South/-Sud	Jackson, Cameron	PC	
Cambridge	Farnan, Mike	ND	
Carleton	Sterling, Norman W.	PC	
Carleton East/-Est	Morin, Gilles E.	L	Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président et Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Chatham-Kent	Hope, Randy R.	ND	
Cochrane North/-Nord	Wood, Len	ND	
Cochrane South/-Sud	Bisson, Gilles	ND	
Cornwall	Cleary, John C.	L	
Don Mills	Johnson, David	PC	
Dovercourt	Silipo, Hon/L'hon Tony	ND	Minister of Community and Social Services / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Downsview	Perruzza, Anthony	ND	
Dufferin-Peel	Tilson, David	PC	
Durham Centre/-Centre	White, Drummond	ND	
Durham East/-Est	Mills, Gord	ND	
Durham West/-Ouest	Wiseman, Jim	ND	
Durham-York	O'Connor, Larry	ND	
Eglinton	Poole, Dianne	L	
Elgin	North, Peter	ND	
Essex-Kent	Hayes, Pat	ND	
Essex South/-Sud	Vacant	L	
Etobicoke-Humber	Henderson, D. James	L	
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Grier, Hon/L'hon Ruth A.	ND	Minister of Health / ministre de la Santé
Etobicoke-Rexdale	Philip, Hon/L'hon Ed	ND	Minister of Municipal Affairs / ministre des Affaires municipales
Etobicoke West/-Ouest	Stockwell, Chris	PC	
Fort William	McLeod, Lyn	L	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition
Fort York	Marchese, Rosario	ND	
Frontenac-Addington	Wilson, Hon/L'hon Fred	ND	Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille
Grey	Murdoch, Bill	PC	
Guelph	Fletcher, Derek	ND	
Halton Centre/-Centre	Sullivan, Barbara	L	
Halton North/-Nord	Duignan, Noel	ND	
Hamilton Centre/-Centre	Christopherson, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services / solliciteur général et ministre des Services correctionnels
Hamilton East/-Est	Mackenzie, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Hamilton Mountain	Charlton, Hon/L'hon Brian	ND	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, government House leader and minister responsible for the automobile insurance review / président du Conseil de gestion, leader parlementaire du gouvernement et ministre délégué à l'Assurance-automobile
Hamilton West/-Ouest	Allen, Hon/L'hon Richard	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère du Développement économique et du Commerce
Hastings-Peterborough	Buchanan, Hon/L'hon Elmer	ND	Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation
High Park-Swansea	Ziemba, Hon/L'hon Elaine	ND	Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for human rights, disability issues, seniors' issues and race relations / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre déléguée aux Droits de la personne, aux Affaires des personnes handicapées, aux Affaires des personnes âgées et aux Relations interraciales
Huron	Klopp, Paul	ND	
Kenora	Miclash, Frank	L	
Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles	Wilson, Gary	ND	
Kitchener	Ferguson, Will	Ind	
Kitchener-Wilmot	Cooper, Mike	ND	
Lake Nipigon/Lac-Nipigon	Pouliot, Hon/L'hon Gilles	ND	Minister of Transportation, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Transports, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
Lambton	MacKinnon, Ellen	ND	
Lanark-Renfrew	Jordan, W. Leo	PC	
Lawrence	Cordiano, Joseph	L	
Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W.	PC	
Lincoln	Hansen, Ron	ND	
London Centre/-Centre	Boyd, Hon/L'hon Marion	ND	Attorney General, minister responsible for women's issues / procureure générale, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
London North/-Nord	Cunningham, Dianne	PC	
London South/-Sud	Wininger, David	ND	
Markham	Cousens, W. Donald	PC	
Middlesex	Mathysen, Irene	ND	
Mississauga East/-Est	Sola, John	Ind	
Mississauga North/-Nord	Offer, Steven	L	
Mississauga South/-Sud	Marland, Margaret	PC	
Mississauga West/-Ouest	Mahoney, Steven W.	L	
Muskoka-Georgian Bay	Waters, Daniel	ND	
Nepean	Daigeler, Hans	L	
Niagara Falls	Harrington, Margaret H.	ND	
Niagara South/-Sud	Coppen, Hon/L'hon Shirley	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation; chief government whip / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs ; whip en chef du gouvernement
Nickel Belt	Laughren, Hon/L'hon Floyd	ND	Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances
Nipissing	Harris, Michael	PC	
Norfolk	Jamison, Norm	ND	
Northumberland	Fawcett, Joan M.	L	
Oakville South/-Sud	Carr, Gary	PC	
Oakwood	Rizzo, Tony	ND	
Oriole	Caplan, Elinor	L	
Oshawa	Pilkey, Hon/L'hon Allan	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Municipal Affairs / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Affaires municipales
Ottawa Centre/-Centre	Gigantes, Hon/L'hon Evelyn	ND	Minister of Housing / ministre du Logement
Ottawa East/-Est	Grandmaître, Bernard C.	L	
Ottawa-Rideau	O'Neill, Yvonne	L	
Ottawa South/-Sud	McGuinty, Dalton J.P.	L	
Ottawa West/-Ouest	Chiarelli, Robert	L	
Oxford	Sutherland, Kimble	ND	
Parkdale	Ruprecht, Tony	L	
Parry Sound	Eves, Ernie	PC	

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Perth	Haslam, Hon/L'hon Karen	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Health / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Santé
Peterborough	Carter, Jenny	ND	
Port Arthur	Wark-Martyn, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Education and Training / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation
Prescott and Russell / Prescott et Russell	Poirier, Jean	L	
Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings/Prince Edward- Lennox-Hastings-Sud	Johnson, Paul R.	ND	
Quinte	O'Neil, Hugh P.	L	
Rainy River	Hampton, Hon/L'hon Howard	ND	Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Renfrew North/-Nord	Conway, Sean G.	L	
Riverdale	Churley, Hon/L'hon Marilyn	ND	Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
S-D-G & East Grenville / S-D-G et Grenville-Est	Villeneuve, Noble	PC	
St Andrew-St Patrick	Akande, Zanana	ND	
St Catharines	Bradley, James J.	L	
St Catharines-Brock	Haeck, Christel	ND	
St George-St David	Murphy, Tim	L	
Sarnia	Huget, Bob	ND	
Sault Ste Marie / Sault-Sainte-Marie	Martin, Tony	ND	
Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry	L	
Scarborough Centre/-Centre	Owens, Stephen	ND	
Scarborough East/-Est	Frankford, Robert	ND	
Scarborough-Ellesmere	Warner, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Speaker / Président
Scarborough North/-Nord	Curling, Alvin	L	
Scarborough West/-Ouest	Swarbrick, Hon/L'hon Anne	ND	Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation / ministre de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs
Simcoe Centre/-Centre	Wessinger, Paul	ND	
Simcoe East/-Est	McLean, Allan K.	PC	
Simcoe West/-Ouest	Wilson, Jim	PC	
Sudbury	Murdock, Sharon	ND	
Sudbury East/-Est	Martel, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Timiskaming	Ramsay, David	L	
Victoria-Haliburton	Drainville, Dennis	Ind	
Waterloo North/-Nord	Witmer, Elizabeth	PC	
Welland-Thorold	Kormos, Peter	ND	
Wellington	Arnott, Ted	PC	
Wentworth East/-Est	Morrow, Mark	ND	
Wentworth North/-Nord	Abel, Donald	ND	
Willowdale	Harnick, Charles	PC	
Wilson Heights	Kwinter, Monte	L	
Windsor-Riverside	Cooke, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Minister of Education and Training, minister responsible for the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / ministre de l'Éducation et de la Formation, ministre responsable du Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main- d'oeuvre
Windsor-Sandwich	Dadamo, George	ND	
Windsor-Walkerville	Lessard, Wayne	ND	
York Centre/-Centre	Sorbara, Gregory S.	L	
York East/-Est	Malkowski, Gary	ND	
York Mills	Turnbull, David	PC	
York North/-Nord	Beer, Charles	L	
York South/-Sud	Rae, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	Premier, President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre, président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires gouvernementales
Yorkview	Mammoliti, George	ND	

CONTENTS

Monday 31 May 1993

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

National Laughter Day	
Mr Grandmaître	997
Economic policy	
Mrs Marland	997
Mr Jordan	998
Control of smoking	
Mr O'Connor	997
Job creation	
Ms Poole	997
Canadian Forces overseas	
Mr Winninger	998
Ming Pao Newspapers	
Mr Curling	998
Social contract negotiations	
Mrs Cunningham	998
French-language education	
Mr Gary Wilson	999
Gambling	
Mr Drainville	999

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

AND RESPONSES

Environmental Bill of Rights	
Mr Wildman	1000
Mr Offer	1000
Mr Tilson	1001

ORAL QUESTIONS

Tax increases	
Mrs McLeod	1002
Mr Rae	1002
Social contract negotiations	
Mrs McLeod	1004
Mr Rae	1004
Economic policy	
Mr Harris	1005
Mr Rae	1005
Government advertising	
Mrs Caplan	1009
Mr Rae	1009

Health cards

Mr Jim Wilson	1009
Mrs Grier	1010

Family support payments

Ms Haeck	1010
Mrs Boyd	1010

Health services

Mrs Sullivan	1011
Mrs Grier	1011

Eye examinations

Mr Jim Wilson	1012
Mrs Grier	1012

MOTIONS

Consideration of bills

Mr Charlton	1012
-------------------	------

PETITIONS

Retail store hours

Mr Eddy	1012
---------------	------

Gambling

Mr Arnott	1013
Mr Jim Wilson	1013
Mr Drainville	1014
Mr Sutherland	1014
Mr O'Connor	1015
Mr Curling	1015
Mr Wiseman	1015

Cancer treatment

Mr Mills	1013
----------------	------

Health care

Mrs Sullivan	1013
--------------------	------

Drug benefits

Ms Poole	1014
----------------	------

Post-polio syndrome

Mr Sterling	1014
-------------------	------

Automobile insurance

Mr Sterling	1015
-------------------	------

Pension funds

Mr Murphy	1015
-----------------	------

FIRST READINGS

Township of Aldborough and the Village of Rodney Act, 1993, Bill Pr87	
Mr North	1015
Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993, Bill 26	
Mr Wildman	1016
Chua Di-Da (Amidatemple) of Toronto Act, 1993, Bill Pr11	
Mr Ruprecht	1016
Aga Ming Property Owners Association Act, 1993, Bill Pr17	
Mr Eves	1016
City of Ottawa Act, 1993, Bill Pr69	
Mr Chiarelli	1016
Korean Canadian Cultural Association Act, 1993, Bill Pr5	
Mr David Johnson	1016

1993 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the adjourned debate

Mr Cousens	1016
Mr Sutherland	1020
Mrs O'Neill	1022, 1023, 1027
Mr Perruzza	1022, 1027, 1031
Mr Mammoliti	1022
Mrs Fawcett	1026
Mr Hope	1027, 1036
Mrs Marland	1028, 1033
Mr Tilson	1032, 1036
Mr Runciman	1032
Mr White	1033
Mr North	1033, 1037
Mr Curling	1036

OTHER BUSINESS

Legislative pages

The Speaker	999
-------------------	-----

Visitor

The Speaker	1000
-------------------	------

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Lundi 31 mai 1993

DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Journée nationale du rire

M. Grandmaître	997
----------------------	-----

Éducation en français

M. Gary Wilson	999
----------------------	-----

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Charte des droits environnementaux de 1993, projet de loi 26

M. Wildman	1015
------------------	------



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Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 1 June 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 1 juin 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

Table of contents

Table of contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears on the outside back cover.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Tuesday 1 June 1993

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I'd like to make a brief chronology of the underserviced area shemozzle that we've witnessed the last few weeks.

Early in May there was an announcement by the Ministry of Health concerning the doctors in underserviced areas which were not included for northern Ontario. There are only five regions and counties of southern Ontario that were included in that underserviced area program. Within a few days, though, ministry officials said at least 60 to 70 family physicians were needed in northern Ontario.

On May 12 I asked a question in the House to the Honourable Ruth Grier why northern Ontario was not in the underserviced area program.

Friday, May 21, CBC Radio had received a list from the ministry which included northern Ontario locations which needed doctors, and these doctors would be fully compensated.

Following this report, two of my staff spent all afternoon trying to locate that list to confirm what had been reported on CBC. The underserviced area program could not confirm the contents of the list but would only say that the list was being revised and that it would be available on Tuesday the 25th. Two doctors called my office to confirm that they had been told they would be covered by this list.

The very next day, the Saturday Star of May 22 carried an ad advertising for doctors and asked them to call the underserviced area program. In northern Ontario now, 111 doctors' positions were identified in 25 municipalities.

It's unbelievable that the media were given that information but our offices, which were inundated with calls from interns and residents and concerned parents, could not get that information. Obviously the government was more concerned in making this information available to the media and not to the taxpayers.

Obviously, from all of this, it is apparent that the government is developing policy on the fly without employing the long-term planning that the people of Ontario deserve.

Mr Bernard Grandmaitre (Ottawa East): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: Do we have a quorum?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Table, a count, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is present, Speaker.

NIAGARA ESCARPMENT COMMISSION

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): Recently, Mary Munro and John McClellan, two hearing officers and members of Ontario's Environmental Assessment Board, produced a five-year review of the Niagara Escarpment which I found to be fair and objective. In fact it confirmed many of my own views and verified much of what we in Grey have been saying for years.

We have long believed that, while we must preserve the escarpment land, the commission is a biased, undemocratic body which has no even standards when rendering decisions. The report agrees, saying that the commission staff do not seem to be able to appreciate views different from their own and that the commission is seen as distant, impersonal and insensitive to economic and personal needs. The report goes on to say that the commission tends to ignore the ecological nature of a property when making a decision and attempts merely to preserve a visual landscape, a failing which we in Grey have witnessed time after time.

I am pleased that someone has finally told the people of Ontario the truth about the NEC's administration of the plan, but I am sorry that although they exposed the commission for what it is, they did not recommend its abolition. Therefore, today I will be introducing, once again, a private member's bill to redefine the area with the consent of local municipalities and put the final decision for any development on the protected area into the hands of the people in this House. The commission would then be unnecessary, thereby saving millions of taxpayers' dollars while still preserving our environmental land in a fair and more equitable fashion.

COR BAL

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): I rise today in the House to recognize a great achievement of one of my constituents, Mr Cor Bal. Earlier this month, Mr Bal won the Ontario Waste Minimization Award given to the outstanding individual in minimizing waste. Mr Bal, also known as the Honey King, was nominated for the award in recognition of the significant contribution he has made in promoting the 3Rs.

Focusing on the reuse of the 3Rs, Mr Bal, who had a number of baby food jars piling up in his trailer, knew there must be a more productive use for these jars than putting them into the recycle bin. After removing the labels from these jars, he thoroughly cleans them and fills them with nine different flavours of honey obtained from a local bee-keeper. Mr Bal then relabels the jars and arranges them in wooden racks as gift packs for sale in assorted flavours. Even the wooden racks are made of reused material. Each one is handmade by a retired carpenter in Waubaushene. Mr Bal sells the gift packs mostly to museums and hospital gift shops, some

as far away as Toronto. Mr Bal realizes that he could simply buy new jars cheaper than reusing the old ones, but he says, "It's done for the sake of the environment."

In closing, I would like to once again congratulate Mr Bal for winning the outstanding individual award in waste minimization and hope that more people will follow his lead in making our environment a cleaner place.

COURT REPORTERS

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): These days you can hardly pick up a newspaper without reading about the social contract hearings where the government is attempting to eliminate some of the debt by trying to avoid layoffs, and yet in the bowels of the Attorney General's department, without notice to anybody, unilaterally they are in fact carrying out plans that may result in some 700 to 800 women being laid off.

I speak of the court reporters. Many of these women are single parents. They are in fact going to cut them off from the support for their families.

I suggest that they're implementing a program that was tried in British Columbia and failed miserably. It has also been decried by a Court of Appeals judge in New Jersey, saying that this can have an impact in terms of safety, in terms of fairness, in terms of ensuring that people are not allowed to walk away from perhaps very serious criminal trials because a transcript that is faithfully reported presently by reporters is being reported by that great machine in the sky.

I suggest to the Attorney General that perhaps she should look at this issue. I wonder if she is aware of the fact that this is in fact going to impact, as I said as I started, on some 700 to 800 women in this province who have not had the benefit of sitting around a table, as others have had, with the social contract but in fact are going to find their jobs slipping right out from underneath them, and perhaps at the great detriment to society not only in terms of fairness but in terms of safety for the justice system.

1340

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): On Thursday, May 27, I had the privilege of meeting with the University of Western Ontario clinical clerks, medical students, interns and residents to discuss the government's proposal to penalize new physicians for practising in Ontario.

The proposals suggested by the government to significantly reduce billing fees among new family physicians, paediatricians and psychiatrists by 75% have raised serious concerns among Ontario's medical students. The proposals leave hundreds of young students and physicians in residency training in Ontario

medical schools in a most precarious position regarding their future careers.

The faculty and departments of family medicine, psychiatry and paediatrics are similarly demoralized. They recognize and support the need to reform the current system of health care in order to create a system which adequately addresses the needs of our population. However, they are very disappointed that the minister did not discuss the 75% fee cut with the OMA and the fact that these proposals do not effectively address the real problem.

It costs \$2 million to educate and train one doctor. The government's draconian decision to slash fees to new physicians by 75% will lock out 2,500 doctors in training and 400 physician graduates this year. The government should seriously reassess this policy.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): On June 1 of every year, injured workers from across this province have gathered outside of this assembly to remind us of their plight. These workers have invested their lives and their bodies in our economy. After months of hospital stays with broken bodies and spirits, their recompense takes far too long and they go through a humiliating process to achieve it.

I know particularly of the hard work and dedication of the Durham Region Union of Injured Workers, many of whom I see regularly and who carry the pain of the struggles they have fought through. Here today in the members' gallery is Fran Standing Ready, who is the president of the Durham Region Union of Injured Workers. They would like to see an office for the Workers' Compensation Board in Durham region, and every year at this time I stand up to make that point. My letters are unanswered. Their letters are unanswered. Their concerns have only partly been heard. They are pleased with many of the reforms that we've been able to accomplish and they know what the alternatives are, but still there is much, much left to do.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr White: Thank you very much.

Simple changes in how services are offered could help them access retraining for permanent new jobs.

In the speech from the throne we made employment a priority. It is important that we not minimize the contribution of these workers and separate them from their due recompense and the retraining that they need.

EASTERN ONTARIO

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): Last week I addressed a crowd representing over 1,000 union members who were protesting the NDP government's plan to cut jobs in Cornwall and area through the social contract negotiation process. Ten local presidents of OPSEU stated, "Not only has the Ontario government

failed in its promise to assist the community in recovering from the devastating recession; they are in fact planning to make things worse by cutting back on public service jobs."

Members of this House will recall that it was only a few weeks ago that the member for Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings had the nerve to stand up and say that Cornwall and area was crying wolf about economic losses due to the recession. The picketers in Cornwall know the real story of more than 3,000 jobs lost and more than 20 plant closures in two years, and they are saying that they don't want to be the target of this government's fiscal mismanagement any more. If Bob Rae doesn't want to listen to the opposition, he should do well to listen to the 12 local union presidents.

Again, I insist that the Premier consider locating one of the crown corporations in Cornwall and area and prove that he does really care about eastern Ontario.

SENIORS' HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): As of today, seniors who rely on daily supplies of oxygen will have their coverage severely cut under the Ontario drug benefit program.

Ted Kelleher, a Burlington senior, was informed yesterday that today the NDP Health ministry will cap oxygen costs at \$475 per month. The rest is now up to him, without regard for his ability to pay. Like many seniors, Ted is on a fixed income. His life-sustaining oxygen bill, personally to him, will now be between \$18,000 to \$20,000 a year. The NDP budget decision to cut oxygen services came without any prior consultation or prior warning. He is now in fear for his future, as he wonders how he will pay for the oxygen supplies that he needs to live.

If there is one phrase by which Ontario seniors will remember the NDP and its treatment of their health care needs, it will be, "Cut and delist until they're at risk." Seniors have already suffered the delisting of vital drugs and Bill 101, the long-term care legislation, will delist extended care from OHIP. Is this the real NDP plan for community-based health care and long-term care services for seniors?

Ted's first option now will be to spend the rest of his life immobilized on his back in order to save money. Is this the NDP version of independent living? Why doesn't the government investigate why oxygen costs about \$100 a pound in Buffalo, New York, and the same amount of oxygen costs about \$400 in Niagara Falls, Ontario? Why doesn't the government investigate this on behalf of consumers instead of just ripping the programs away from seniors?

SENIOR CITIZENS' MONTH

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I'm pleased to ask members to join with me in celebrating June as seniors' month in Ontario. Today's seniors were here

before the pill, before penicillin and polio shots, antibiotics and frisbees. We were before frozen foods, nylon and dacron, Kinsey, credit cards and ballpoint pens.

This year's seniors' month theme is "Sharing Our Experiences." Time-sharing for us meant togetherness, not computers, and a chip was a small piece of wood. Most seniors got married first and then lived together. Closets were for clothes and not for coming out of, and a bunny was just a small rabbit. We'd never heard of McDonald's and we thought fast food meant abstaining for Lent.

In our day, cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass was for mowing, Coke was a refreshing drink and pot was something you cooked in. We were before Batman, DDT, vitamin pills, disposable diapers and instant coffee.

Through sharing memories of their life, seniors bring an important dimension to today's Ontario. I encourage all seniors to take part in the activities taking place around the province during the coming weeks. I believe tomorrow evening the Lieutenant Governor is going to be in the Legislature, downstairs with the Minister of Citizenship, to honour seniors in this province. I encourage all seniors to be there and I encourage all seniors to show in the month of June what we're made of.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I invite all members to welcome to our gallery this afternoon a former member who served for 15 years in this assembly, representing the riding of Wellington, Mr Jack Johnson.

I would also like to invite members to welcome to our assembly and indeed to our country, seated in the Speaker's gallery today, a visiting parliamentary delegation from the Federal Republic of Germany. Welcome.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

JOBS ONTARIO COMMUNITY ACTION

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I rise today to provide details on a new program for community economic development called Jobs Ontario Community Action. This initiative, which was announced in last month's budget, is an integral part of the government's 10-point plan to put Ontario back to work. As the Minister of Finance announced in his budget address, this new initiative will build on the success of Jobs Ontario, and I want to take a moment to review the progress we've made so far.

As you know, Jobs Ontario Capital created or maintained over 8,000 jobs last fiscal year and will invest \$700 million in 1993-94, creating or maintaining 12,000 jobs.

Over 24,000 positions have been created by employers to date through Jobs Ontario Training; 10,000

workers are completing training and are already on the job. Last fiscal year, \$98 million in training assistance was provided through this program, and this number will more than triple to \$329 million in 1993-94, underlining our commitment to put Ontario back to work.

In 1992, Jobs Ontario Youth created 9,500 summer jobs. Our target for this year is 10,000 summer jobs.

Finally, Jobs Ontario Homes is supporting the construction of new homes and will create nearly 3,000 jobs this fiscal year.

1350

Our initiative to support community economic development will build on the success of our other Jobs Ontario programs. Called Jobs Ontario Community Action, this initiative aims to give local communities the resources and the tools they need to undertake economic renewal initiatives.

It will empower communities and support job creation by encouraging economic development activities on the part of those who best understand what is needed, the communities themselves.

The new Jobs Ontario Community Action initiative will support building a strong foundation for long-term community growth and jobs. It will stimulate investment in urban, rural, regional and northern communities across the province by helping communities to help themselves.

Community economic development will foster self-reliance in communities, allowing them to sustain economic growth through local planning and investment in economic activity.

It will create greater cooperation in communities and it will support new partnerships. It will also allow new groups of people to play a part in community economic development. Along with local government, labour, business and educational institutions, our initiatives will also include community groups, cultural groups, credit unions, cooperatives, equity groups and other interested citizens.

Jobs Ontario Community Action will further empower women's groups, ethnic organizations and aboriginal people in the economic planning and development decisions that affect their communities.

Community economic development will promote the growth of local enterprises using locally based financing and help to create new jobs in communities across the province. During the first three years of the program, we will invest \$300 million in community action initiatives.

The funds for this program will come from a consolidation of a number of previously existing programs with support from Jobs Ontario Capital. Commitments made under these previously existing programs will be honoured.

This new approach will use government funds in a

different way to better meet the needs of communities. Instead of ministries designing and administering many different programs to meet diverse needs in various parts of the province, we will pool our resources and put communities in control. They will decide on the economic priorities they want funded by the provincial government, not the other way around.

Consolidating many of the capital grant and economic development programs that previously existed will provide simpler access to the financial assistance and a speedier response to community initiatives across the province.

To further improve access, regional teams have been put in place to provide Ontario communities with a local single window to the program. The teams are made up of representatives from the ministries of Culture; Tourism and Recreation; Municipal Affairs; Agriculture and Food; Citizenship; Northern Development and Mines; and my own Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. Other ministries will be brought in as needed.

While these ministries have all been involved in economic development activities in the past, the key difference is that now our efforts will be more closely coordinated on a regional basis. All stakeholders will be informed about how to contact the appropriate regional team to gain access to the program.

The role of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines will be unique in recognition of the special needs and community development issues in northern Ontario.

Jobs Ontario Community Action will allocate 25% of the funding to community development initiatives in northern Ontario. Two of the five regional teams will be established in northern Ontario, chaired by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, and report through the minister, the Honourable Shelley Martel.

Jobs Ontario Community Action represents a new way of government doing business with communities. This is a cooperative and corporate government-wide approach, involving many different ministries working together as a team. We're changing the way we do business in order to better support communities in their empowerment, and we're working to strengthen our partnership with communities across the province.

This new way of doing business also presents communities with a new way of working together. It gives them a chance to harness and build on the experience of everyone in their communities.

I'm confident that this new comprehensive approach will result in not only better service to our customers, but a more effective use of our resources.

Jobs Ontario Community Action has three major components: community development, community financing and community capital.

Under the community development component, assistance will be available to help build the capacity of communities to come together and to set long-term priorities and to identify ways to turn local plans into actions. In order to ensure that projects are community-owned and community-driven, all partners in the community must be involved in economic development decisions.

This will allow participation by people who may not have been involved traditionally in economic development decisions. It will also ensure, and this is very important, that the social, environmental, cultural and economic objectives of the entire community are addressed in the economic development process.

It will provide support for leadership and organizational development, community-based strategic planning, special research and marketing activities, as well as innovation or unique community economic development projects that contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of the community.

We'll be announcing more details on this component of the program at a later date.

Community financing will help communities mobilize their financial resources for economic development and growth.

Too often, community members with a desire to invest in their own communities have been frustrated because financing has not been available from traditional sources. Community financing will introduce two specific measures to facilitate local investment.

My colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Ed Philip, will introduce legislation enabling the creation of community loan funds and community investment share corporations later this week.

A third component, community capital, will provide financial assistance to capital infrastructure projects. Projects could be such initiatives as community-sponsored training facilities or renovation of public or non-profit community facilities.

In the past, communities pursued funding for local projects from a variety of ministries and programs. As a result, government funding did not always go to the projects that had the highest priority for that community and, because government didn't have programs to fund everything, some good projects didn't get the support they deserved.

We think it makes more sense to let communities draw up their own economic development blueprints and set their own priorities first. Then government will use its economic development tools to support and fund the community's priorities.

We are also very aware that communities are anxious to begin work on specific economic development initiatives.

To address this immediate demand and respond to the initiative already shown by many communities, I am

pleased to announce that as part of the \$100 million that will be spent this year under the Jobs Ontario Community Action initiative, up to \$31 million has been set aside to fund capital projects that can begin this summer.

This will not only provide immediate job creation, but it will address the pent-up demand from communities which have applied for project funding under the old programs that we are now consolidating.

These funds will be aimed at supporting projects submitted for consideration under earlier programs, as well as for any project that would have ordinarily been submitted to previous existing capital programs related to community economic development.

Proposals that can be shown ready for startup within 120 days of funding approval will now be eligible for consideration under this first phase of the program.

We will provide up to one third of project costs, up to a maximum of \$3 million, and smaller communities will be eligible for up to 50% provincial funding.

To be eligible under this fast-track process, projects must be financially viable and not for the purchase of land or to support for-profit enterprises. Eligible projects must also have all the appropriate land use, environmental and other relevant approvals. In most cases, applications submitted under this process will be considered and processed and responses to the communities before August 15, 1993. In this way, we hope to be able to address the immediate needs of communities.

Jobs Ontario Community Action is a brand-new approach. It is a partnership with government and with communities designed to help communities help themselves.

Within those communities, it will involve new partners in the process of economic development. For example, community groups, cultural groups and other interested citizens will have a voice and a role in setting their community's economic development priorities.

When those priorities have been set, this initiative will provide those communities with the tools they need to realize their plans. Community development will help build the capacity of communities to tackle economic development projects. Community financing will provide the communities with the financial tools they need to fund their economic priorities and to create jobs. Community capital will provide support for the capital infrastructure projects that meet the community's priorities.

I am confident that we will help build the capacity of our communities and to put in place those strategic plans for economic development. It will give those communities the tools they need to build a stronger economic future for Ontario.

Together with other Jobs Ontario initiatives and the government's economic renewal programs, Jobs Ontario

Community Action will help put Ontario back to work.
1400

FOREST INDUSTRY

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural Resources): I want to share some good news with members of the Legislature. Last evening, H. Jager Developments Inc of Calgary announced it had selected a site in northeastern Ontario for its proposed oriented strand board, or OSB, mill. The site selected is the community of Limer, located 32 kilometres east of Wawa.

This announcement sends a message to investors across Canada and the world that Ontario is open for business and is an excellent place to invest. We are committed to putting the people of Ontario back to work in high-technology industries that can compete effectively in global markets. I welcome this announcement and congratulate the company on its further progress towards establishing this new \$90-million plant to produce OSB, a plywood substitute. The plant is expected to be operating by January 1995.

This economic boost to northern Ontario is yet another sign that industry is gaining confidence in Ontario's economy and in the economy of northern Ontario. Now that the site has been selected, the company can go on to work with the province to finalize details of its business plan, such as wood supply allocation, while providing confirmation of its equity and debt financing.

In its announcement, the company indicated that the project is expected to create 170,000 person-hours of work during the construction phase and 114 permanent production, maintenance, supervisory and management jobs in the plant thereafter. In addition, it is expected to generate 270 jobs in logging and transportation and upwards of 600 spinoff jobs in the supplier, service and tourism sectors.

Moreover, the Algoma Central Railway, the province's trucking industry and the region as a whole stand to benefit greatly from the volumes of timber and finished products being transported to and from the plant.

The Ministry of Natural Resources is committed to a forest product sector that produces valuable goods and wealth for the province, employees, company shareholders, as well as for the communities within which it operates. Therefore, we are working with the forest industry to establish new business ventures.

For this project, for example, the Ministry of Natural Resources has conditionally committed to Jager an annual wood supply of up to 600,000 cubic metres of hardwood in several areas. The mill will consume an underutilized supply of hardwood and turn it into high value added products. This is also an example of how we are finding new markets for trees that in the past

were believed to have little or no commercial value for the existing forest industry.

Finally, the proposed mill will be located in an area of Ontario which offers many opportunities for new investors: sustainably managed natural resources, an able workforce and an effective transportation structure.

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I wish to reply to the statement by the Minister of Natural Resources. Of course, we in the opposition share his view and we're very happy that H. Jager Developments of Calgary has chosen Ontario as a place to employ Ontarians.

I will say, though, that this has to be put in some context. This has to be put in the context of a northern Ontario that is experiencing in excess of 15.2% unemployment. In the rural north, the part of the north we're talking about here, the unemployment rate would be far higher. While the minister talks about the jobs that are being created, in this particular instance he does not speak to the 250 jobs that the north has lost directly as a result of his ministry not going to Haileybury or the Mines ministry not going to Elliot Lake. I find that when you put this announcement today in context, the people of northern Ontario will not be particularly impressed.

I want to talk about the message that the Bob Rae ministry is sending to the people of the north. The ministry has said and is tending 50% less in the forests of Ontario today than it did in 1990. The ministry is mulching 11 million trees this year. The ministry is planting 25% less trees in the province this year than it did just three years ago. As opposed to that, they're increasing stumpage fees by 43%, they're increasing the timber licences by 100%, they're obligating industry in this province to spend \$600 million to meet environmental regulations and they say, "But yes, we will give you \$10 million to help."

This is the kind of Ontario that this minister talks about being open for business. Well, we as northerners find this ministry to be unacceptable.

JOBS ONTARIO COMMUNITY ACTION

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I'd like to respond to the minister's statements on Jobs Ontario Community Action. The minister uses great words, "community economic development," "renewal initiatives," "empower communities" and "support job creation," and who wouldn't support that?

But this is just the continuation of the Jobs Ontario shell game. It's not the new approach she claims it is. In fact, this isn't new money. This is the recycling of old programming and old funding and they're calling it a brand-new approach.

The minister also boasts about Jobs Ontario Capital. Well, last year, Jobs Ontario Capital too was announced as a new program and yet you know what happened, Mr

Speaker? Funds were taken from one ministry out of their capital budget, only to reappear later as Jobs Ontario Capital. There was no new funding. They just took with one hand and gave with the other.

She talks about Jobs Ontario Homes, which is to create 3,000 jobs this fiscal year. How many did they create last year when they promised the same thing? Not one single job. Jobs Ontario child care: They promised 20,000 and they delivered 300 last year. Shame.

Jobs Ontario Training continues to be their largest public relations scam. They spend \$700,000 on promotion, they spend \$1.5 million on advertising, and yet they only met two thirds of their modest target of 10,000 jobs last year. They talk about 24,000 positions. Their own statistics showed they only created 7,600 jobs last year by March 31, and the 24,000 they claim is pure camouflage. They're not long-term jobs; they're not highly skilled jobs. This whole program is a sham.

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): I read with interest the statement of the minister, and I'm reminded of the classic definition of a consultant, which is a man who borrows your watch to tell you what time it is.

This is a program that is using local enterprises, using local-based financing, using financial resources of the community, and the government is proposing that it is going to mobilize this for those communities. I would suggest that given this government's record, it is not in a position to set an example of how communities should be mobilizing their resources.

I also have some very grave concerns with the method of approval. They say that eligible projects must also have appropriate land use, environmental and other relevant approvals, and this all to be done by August. This is June 1. To suggest that will ever happen this summer is absurd.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I'm pleased to comment on this initiative by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Unfortunately, what this is is a broken record. Around and around we go, tax and spend.

Here is a minister who stands up and talks about creating, I think, 12,000 new jobs at a time when a budget killed 50,000 jobs; \$2 billion in new taxes killed 50,000 jobs. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business said the number one problem for business today is taxation, so they come in, tax and spend, create 12,000 jobs, spend \$700 million on this program when they killed 50,000 jobs in the last budget.

Where was this minister when the decisions were being made about this budget? She sat there and said nothing. Now all the jobs are being lost.

Mr Speaker, I want to tell you, on page 2 she talks about empowering. People don't want empowerment; they want employment.

This is a government that stands up with platitudes. They are killing jobs in Canada today. During this recession, Ontario has lost 80% of the jobs. This has been an Ontario-led recession, and this minister, who came in as the saviour from the Ministry of Health—she was going to save it—sat there while this Treasurer introduced 50,000 job losses with the last budget and she said nothing.

Now, if she was a minister who sat in the back benches and didn't have much authority, we could understand it. Where was she at the cabinet table when jobs were being lost in the province of Ontario? She sat there and said nothing: \$2 billion in tax increases, 50,000 jobs are going to be lost, and she stands up in this Legislature and talks about an increase of 12,000 jobs.

On page 2, she says we're going to have communities with local single windows to the program. I think the only way we're going to get jobs in this province is when we throw this government right out the window.

1410

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I would like to make a few comments on the Minister of Natural Resources' announcement today, and I would like to start with a question: why he feels the announcement of a new industry in the Minister of Environment and Energy's riding is a statement—I would consider that a straight news item—whereas a policy change is just a news item. I would suggest that the minister assess what is policy and what is news. We've had this trouble with this government for some time now, where when it's a statement of policy they give it to the press, and when it's just something as a news item they bring it into the House.

I refer to the minister's news release. The minister's news release says he welcomes this news release and congratulates the company on its further progress towards establishing a new plant. Now, I don't know how long under the previous minister this plant had been negotiating to be established near Wawa, but certainly we're glad that the plant is being established and that it is going to bring employment to the area.

Going back to what the minister considers a news release, we feel it's a statement. They're now going to ask the forest industry to regenerate the forests. They say it's negotiable, but the people in the actual business have no idea what they're talking about. They already collected \$70 million last year from the forest industry on stumpage fees and taxes and others, and now they're saying, "You're going to have to be responsible to regenerate the forests." We need clarification on that.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): While I'm pleased that something in the north is finally happening, I don't want you guys over there to start clapping your hands

on your backs right now. Don't start thinking you're doing something great. If you're going to do something like this—you talk about how the trucking industry will benefit—first you'd better get some roads up there that you can travel on before you're going to do that.

The second thing is, they brag about the 600,000 cubic metres of hardwood that they will be delivering to this mill. All we can really hope in Ontario is that the Premier and his colleagues are out of the province at this time, because if they're not, they'll probably be chained to these logs.

BUDGET DEBATE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: Last May 19, the Treasurer introduced his budget whereby the people of Ontario are being taxed \$2 billion. The following week, all of us in this House left this place and went back to our constituencies, to consult with our constituents, to listen to them speak on various items that were mentioned in the budget, to read their letters.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): You travelled the province? Margaret travelled the province.

Mr Tilson: Yes, we did travel. We travelled all over this province to listen to people on this topic.

My problem is that constituents in my riding and around this province have expressed great alarm on this \$2-billion tax grab. Last week, the Leader of the Opposition spoke for an hour and a half on this topic, on the budget. This was followed by the critic for the Progressive Conservative Party speaking on the budget. Then a member from each of the parties spoke on the budget, and that was half an hour each.

In the past, the total number of days that were spent on budget consideration was considerably more than what is being allowed, because the House leader of this government has announced that he is not scheduling any further days for budget debate in this place. I will say that in 1985 there were eight total days spent on the budget; in 1986 there were nine days; in 1987 there were seven days. In 1988—and this was the budget when this group of people shut down former Treasurer of the Liberal Party Nixon and wouldn't even allow him to read it—13 days were spent on that budget. In 1991 there were two days spent. This year there has been a total of two speakers for each party who have spoken on this whole topic.

I promised my constituents that I would come back to this place and I would speak on this budget, and this House leader has forced me to break my promise. I will tell you, Mr Speaker, that my privilege has been challenged because I'm simply not allowed to speak in this place on a \$2-billion tax grab.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

I certainly appreciate the member's interest in debating the budget. There are two matters which the member should consider. First, we have not reached orders of the day. We are, in terms of routine proceedings, at oral questions. Secondly, it is the prerogative of the government House leader to call forward the business of the day. There is nothing in our standing orders which identifies a particular number of days for debate on the budget, and so hence there is nothing out of order.

It is time for oral questions.

A point of order? A new point of order? The member for York Mills.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): York Mills.

The Speaker: That's correct: the member for York Mills.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Speaker, on the same issue, I would point out that in 1988 the NDP made the Liberal government of the day, when it brought in a budget of approximately half what the NDP has just brought in—they would not allow the government even to debate it on the floor, to read the budget. It was tabled in the Legislature and then it was read outside. This is the same government, and with the pressures that came, there was a total of 13 days that ensued from that particular budget.

We have had no chance, Mr Speaker—

The Speaker: Would the member take his seat. He will know there is nothing out of order.

The House leader, the member for Parry Sound.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Parry Sound.

Mr Turnbull: This is just plain hypocrisy.

The Speaker: Perhaps the member for Parry Sound's colleagues would allow him to speak.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I asked the member for York Mills to come to order so that his very own colleague could place his point of order.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Speaker—

The Speaker: The member is asked to take his seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker: If the member refuses to take his seat, he will be named.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I will again ask the honourable member to take his seat. If the member refuses to show respect for this chamber, he will be named.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I name the member. Mr Turnbull, you are named. You must leave this chamber and not participate in the sitting of the House for the remainder of the day. Sergeant?

Mr Turnbull left the chamber.

Interjections.

1420

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): Mr Speaker, on a point of personal privilege with respect to the same matter: You have, I think, quite correctly pointed out that there is nothing in the standing orders that stipulates the number of days on which budget debate will be scheduled. There's also something in this province called tradition, which this government doesn't seem to understand.

I find it more than ironic that the very person who's the Premier of the province today led his party in 1988, when Mr Nixon, who was then the Treasurer, was going to introduce the budget in this House that called for a \$1.3-billion tax increase. His party would not even permit the Treasurer of the day the courtesy of introducing the budget in the House and ended up with 13 days of budget debate on a budget that increased taxation by \$1.3 billion.

How soon we forget. In 1993, the same guy introduces a budget that increases taxation \$2 billion and he wants to sweep it under the rug in two days.

I ask you, is that fair to the members on this side of the House and maybe even to some of his own backbench colleagues who might have the intestinal fortitude and backbone to stand up and be counted once in a while?

The Speaker: To the honourable member for Parry Sound, I am certainly not unsympathetic to the concerns which he raises, but I must tell the member that ordinarily it is the practice in this House for the three House leaders to determine on a weekly basis what the business of the House will be. Perhaps it's a matter which the three House leaders can reach some agreement on.

The only role that I can fulfil is in trying to uphold the standing orders. There is nothing in the standing orders which will be of assistance to either myself or the member for Parry Sound in attempting to accomplish what he wishes to accomplish. I can only suggest that the three House leaders perhaps can discuss this matter, and as always, if there's some way in which I can be of assistance in that regard, I am more than pleased to do so. But I regret that there is nothing in the standing orders which is of assistance to the member.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): A point of privilege, Mr Speaker: There is absolutely no piece of business more important to all Ontarians, to the constituents of all members of this Legislature, than the provincial budget. That's why we're elected. We're elected to deal with the spending, the taxation, the programs, the deficit; all these are contained in the budget.

If you go back in time, the Legislature used to convene for the purpose of dealing with the budget and

then it adjourned. Then in the fall it would convene if there were any legislative changes required. That might have been a week or two or a month. But primarily I suggest to you and submit to you that we are elected to deal with the budgetary policy. That's why we're here.

I realize the standing orders will not find comfort for 10 million or 11 million Ontarians. There will not be comfort in the standing orders for those of us who were elected to represent their views on the most important piece of business that can possibly be done in the Legislature. It impacts every other piece of legislation. Whether you have the money to enforce laws, whether you have the money to have fairness, whether you have the funds and the programs to have social justice, it's all impacted in the budget.

Mr Speaker, you offered the assistance of your office, and I am asking you and making a direct appeal to you, particularly now for the people of York Mills who have been denied the opportunity of having their member speak on their behalf—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Right on.

Interjection: Turnbull denied himself that opportunity.

Mr Harris: Yes, the member from York Mills is not in the chamber today, but he was elected to represent the viewpoints of the people of York Mills, and he's being denied that opportunity.

I would ask you, Mr Speaker, on behalf of all of us, because this Legislature and the standing orders have evolved among a certain goodwill on behalf of all parties that you will not violate some principles of fairness, of time to debate, of time to represent your constituents' viewpoints on important issues. That has been violated by the government House leader. He's given clear direction that there will be no more time for any debate: "Two days and that's it. We're cutting it off. Bang, bang, bang. That's it for the members and the 10 million taxpayers." That's what Bob Rae and his House leader say.

I would ask you if you would convene a meeting of the three House leaders and express on behalf, particularly, of the minority in this House and all the constituents we represent that it is unacceptable that the most important document of the year is being limited to two days' debate.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Just to add to what has already been said, I think it's important to know that historically the budget debate has been one of those things which has allowed the broadest possible latitude for any of the members in the House to speak to the issues of their constituency, along with the pressures of the budgetary policies of the day. I think it's interesting that in the last two years—and I here differ just a little bit from my friends to my left, because it is quite clear that the New Democratic Party, a long time ago,

decided that the budget is not to be debated in this chamber.

The previous House leader gave us one day last year. This House leader is following along in that tradition. It seems to me that having changed that tradition, it is within the power, at least the ambit of the power that is associated with the Speaker, to make sure those traditions are not thrown out. In fact, where things are not written we go to convention and tradition in this House, and we look to the Speaker to bring those back to the attention of the people who serve here, particularly the people who serve in executive capacity, because it is, because of the necessary pressures of the day, easy to forget about the people's chamber.

The executive role sometimes takes the heads away from those people who used to speak almost incessantly about the rights of Her Majesty's subjects. Now they seem to think of little else than the rights of Her Majesty's executive council, and that means that those of us who are not members of Her Majesty's executive council are not allowed to speak in this chamber about the real policies as they have been developed and presented to this table to consider.

You know, Mr Speaker, that the reading of the budget is for but one purpose, and that is the purpose of introducing those budgetary policies to Her Majesty's subjects and to then have a debate upon those policies, to have an understanding of what each of the constituencies feels about those policies as they are tabled here before Her Majesty is allowed to proceed to implement the taxes and other programs which are put forward under the budgetary policies by the Minister of Finance, as he is now known.

Mr Speaker, I urge you to use your authority and the position that you now hold in this House to ensure that the minority—that is, those people who are not members of the executive council or NDP or independent members who support the NDP—are allowed to actually debate the budgetary policy as is required by the legislative mandate of this chamber. The people's chamber is to allow a thorough discussion of the primary document of this government. That is the budget.

Mr Speaker, just before you rise to cut me off, and you should, I think you should understand that before you do that, this could all be taken away from any controversy at all by having the government House leader—and I invite him through you—stand now and allocate us a number of days to deal with the budget. That would be the best way and the short way of dealing with this problem.

1430

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): The members opposite have done some yelling and ranting about traditions that are being altered. The members perhaps are correct. There are a

number of traditions that have been altered around this place in the last two and a half years.

I have at no time said to either of the opposition House leaders that there would be no more debate on this budget. I have, though, said that the government has a priority agenda, legislative and budget agenda, and that based on progress through that agenda, we will be able to schedule more days of debate on the budget.

If we want to focus on some of the traditions that are being altered around this place, during the five years of the Liberal administration we spent an average of 14 minutes on third reading debates. On most bills we had none. During the Tory administration prior to that, the times were less, not greater.

If the members across the way have a desire to waste time in a consistent way around debate on third reading, once bills have been through second reading and through committee and through committee of the whole House—

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): Debate is not a waste of time in a democracy.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Oriole.

Hon Mr Charlton: —then it will distinctly limit their ability to debate other items.

Mrs Caplan: How dare you.

The Speaker: The member for Oriole, please come to order.

Mr Elston: Point of order.

The Speaker: Members please take their seats. Just take your seat, please.

First, although I had already ruled on the alleged point of order, I was pleased to listen to the three House leaders, primarily because there is obviously some impasse with respect to this item.

Before we begin question period, however, I wish to let members know that it has been a custom in this House to spread out debate on the budget over a matter of time. I notice also that while we don't specify in our standing orders—certainly in Ottawa they limit debate to six days, and I'm not suggesting for a moment that's what we should be doing here, but we do not place a limit on it.

I also note that the Chair is not privy to what will be announced as business for the House, and we have not reached the point in routine proceedings where the business of the House is to be called.

Lastly, in reaction to the leader of the third party's suggestion, I have on other occasions and I again today offer my services, if it will be of any assistance at all, to the three House leaders in trying to arrive at a consensus on how to have this chamber operate in as smooth a fashion as possible and to have ample time for debate. If there is some way in which I can be of assistance, I am delighted to do so.

It is time for oral questions and the Leader of the Opposition. A new point of privilege?

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: I think it's important that you recognize that within our standing orders, under 41(a), we provide six days of debate on our throne speech. During the negotiations to change the standing orders, in which I was involved on behalf of my party, there was a debate over putting in a specific amount of time with regard to the budget debate.

I want to tell you, Mr Speaker, that the response to the idea of putting in a limit of six days with regard to the budget debate was that it would not be nearly enough to deal with the normal budget debate, which was a custom or a tradition of this House. In other words, the whole idea of putting a limitation or even an amount or a time within the standing orders was seen as being a limitation, even though it was going to be a bottom limit.

Now, I think what is very, very important here is the fact that the government House leader has said traditions are changing. Traditions may change or policy may change with regard to the government, but traditions in this House should not be unilateral dictatorship by the government House leader and by Bob Rae as to what happens.

The Speaker: To the member, I've dealt with the point.

Mr Sterling: It is up to you to protect the tradition of this House which has been established for over 100 years for all the members of this House.

The Speaker: Would the member for Carleton please take his seat.

Mr Sterling: We are entitled to speak on the budget of the government of Ontario.

The Speaker: The member for Carleton, please take his seat. I appreciate the point he's raised. I have dealt with the matter. It is time for oral questions. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Thank you, Mr Speaker—

Mr Stockwell: Point of privilege.

The Speaker: No, stop the clock.

Mr Stockwell: What do you mean, no?

Mrs McLeod: Mr Speaker, if the clock is running, it is very difficult—

The Speaker: To the member for Etobicoke West, this had better be something different. Is this on some other matter?

Mr Stockwell: No, it's not about some other matter.

The Speaker: Is it on some other matter?

Mr Stockwell: No, Mr Speaker, it's about the matter at hand.

The Speaker: There is no point of order. There is nothing out of order.

Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, with all due respect, how do you know I don't have a point of privilege until you hear it?

The Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition. We start the clock at 60 minutes.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs McLeod: Thank you, Mr Speaker, although it's difficult to ask questions, given the disruption. I certainly understand the disbelief that greets the government House leader talking about changing traditions in this—

Interjections.

The Speaker: I ask the member for Etobicoke West to take his seat, please. Members will know that a point of order was raised. I have dealt with the point of order. There is nothing out of order. I would suggest that the member should not be engaged in challenging the ruling by the Chair. The clock has started. The Leader of the Opposition has been recognized to place a question.

Mr Stockwell: What are you ruling?

The Speaker: I ask the member for Etobicoke West to come to order or else he will be named. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs McLeod: Mr Speaker, I will ask a question of the Premier on another issue of growing public concern.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs McLeod: Mr Speaker, I would ask that you stop the clock until order is restored in the House.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Stockwell: Point of privilege. I have a point of privilege.

The Speaker: The member for Etobicoke West is asked to take his seat. The member will recall that I asked the member for Etobicoke West if what he had to raise was related to the point that I have dealt with. He responded yes. I have dealt with the point of order. The clock continues to run. If the member insists on causing disorder, he will be named.

The Leader of the Opposition with her question.

Interjections.

Mrs McLeod: Mr Speaker, I would ask that you stop the clock. I think it is important that we get our only opportunity for—

The Speaker: I know. I appreciate the unruly behaviour of certain members in the chamber is depriving the Leader of the Opposition of her rightful time, and I will do my best to adjust for that. I do not want anything to happen in here that would have a negative effect on the opportunity for the Leader of the Opposi-

tion to pose her questions. I am very mindful of that. The Leader of the Opposition with her question.

Mrs McLeod: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.
Interjections.

The Speaker: If certain members refuse to allow the Leader of the Opposition to place her questions, then they must consider that they are causing disorder and so must be named, one by one. I am determined that the Leader of the Opposition will have her opportunity to place a question. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs McLeod: I again share the frustration that all members of the House feel when the government House leader simply tells us that we will only get time to debate the budget if we behave ourselves.

Having said that, I will appreciate your adjusting the clock to recognize the importance of a full hour for question period and I will place a first question to the Premier on another issue of growing public concern.

1440

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Premier, yesterday your chief negotiator, Michael Decter, admitted for the very first time that he is not optimistic about the future of the social contract talks, that he himself is concerned about the talks breaking down. The union of public employees has said that it may pull out of the talks today, and your negotiator said yesterday that he simply does not know what to do to keep the process going. It does sound as though you yourself have a plan, if we can follow the Toronto Star headline which proclaims, "Settle or Else, Rae Tells Unions."

Here we have the situation in Ontario now: the Premier of this province reduced to inarticulate threats. So, Premier, why do you not tell us what you have in mind. "Or else" what?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): What I said yesterday—

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Are those your notes?

Hon Mr Rae: No, no. I just forgot the Toronto Star here.

What I said yesterday was, quote—and I want to read this out because it shows the Leader of the Opposition that it is fairly important, I think, for her to look at what I actually said as opposed to what some headline writer writes, because I think there's often a distinction.

I'm sure she's found in her political life that there are times when she says things and headline writers then write something else. We all know that in the newspaper business the headline writers are one group of people and the reporters are another group of people, so I want to stress that Mr Walker—I'm not saying for a moment that I've been misquoted. I wish occasionally

that I was misquoted but in fact I rarely am.

Unfortunately, I said these powerful, compelling and apparently dramatic words, "'The government is aware of its responsibilities in terms of the need for us to get the \$2 billion out of the size of the public sector payroll,' he told reporters"—"he" referring to myself.

Out of that, I thought, rather mild-mannered, mealy-mouthed phrase—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Weasel words.

Hon Mr Rae: —which my colleague from Nickel Belt refers to as weasel words, an energetic headline writer put in a provocative headline. That's show business but it has very little to do with what's going on at the Royal York Hotel.

My understanding is that people are meeting, that there are discussions under way. We are encouraging those discussions that are now under way to reach a productive and positive agreement. I know that the leader of the Liberal Party will want to criticize the talks as they go on—

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —and then take credit if they are successful and blame us if they are not successful. But all I can say to her is that we continue to want to work away at what we think is a more productive way of trying to find a solution than any other. As difficult as it is, we still think it's worthwhile and we continue to fully support the efforts of our negotiator.

The Speaker: Please take your seat. Supplementary.

Mrs McLeod: I was not asking you to defend yourself or your statement. I'm giving you an opportunity to be absolutely clear on an issue of the utmost urgency. I would tell you, as you surely, surely know, that nobody can negotiate in an atmosphere of good faith when intimidated, which is what you and your House leader seem to understand best.

I would say to you, Premier, if you have a plan, if you have alternatives, if there is an "or else," then you must put your alternatives on the table right now. Your Finance minister, in Hamilton last week, told the Hamilton Spectator that no work was being done on legislation, but the suggestion in today's press is that you are ready to act and that you are prepared to do so in this Legislature before the House rises on June 24.

It appears very likely to us that if you are going to bring in any kind of legislation, it's going to be drafted in haste. It's going to be presented, certainly, in an atmosphere of incredible confusion and distrust.

You need to be clear about your alternatives, and I am asking you, what kind of legislation are you contem-

plating, what impact will that legislation have on the collective bargaining process now and in the future, and what opportunity will we have in this place to debate that legislation? Will we have more opportunity to debate your legislation on the social contract than we have to debate your legislation on your tax increases?

Hon Mr Rae: The honourable member is doing exactly what I think one shouldn't do in the circumstances, and that is to, in a sense, create a sense out there in the public, as well as at the negotiating table, that the government is acting in any way other than in complete good faith. This government, the resources of this government, the resources of everything we're trying to do are focused at one critical point at the moment, and that focus is on the success of the social contract discussions.

I can tell her that there are no other plans being devised. I can say to her that obviously the government is prepared, in the sense of, are we prepared to take on our responsibilities whatever happens on June 4? Of course we are. But are there any plans being drafted in terms of alternatives? No, there are not, and I will say that very explicitly to her and to everyone.

We are working away at a social contract process, which is difficult enough as it is without making it more difficult by any kind of provocation. I don't intend to do anything other than be as constructive and as positive as I can to the people who are on the negotiating team on behalf of the government and on behalf of all those people who've devoted a great deal of time to trying to find a solution, the practical people among all our social partners, who are now coming forward with some practical ideas. I want to focus all my efforts and resources in supporting that team of people and in not provoking anybody.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, do not lecture me. You and only you have created this no-win situation for this province.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs McLeod: Let me tell you, Premier, what you and your government House leader refuse to recognize—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the Leader of the Opposition take her seat, please. We didn't get off to a terrific start today, so perhaps the government benches, as well as others, could relax a little bit. The Leader of the Opposition with her final supplementary.

Mrs McLeod: Let me tell the Premier that as concerned as we are about the chaos that's being created at the potential collapse of his social contract talks, we are equally concerned about some of the deals he might be reaching in order to have those talks reach some conclusion. We are only now beginning to see some of

the implications of what were very last-minute decisions that were made in arriving at the expenditure control plan, and we are very much afraid that exactly the same thing is happening again this week.

We wonder, for example, whether anybody is looking at the long-term costs of offering voluntary early retirement to large numbers of employees. We wonder whether anybody has thought what the cost is to students of giving teachers holidays instead of professional development days. I ask the Premier in all seriousness, is anybody looking at the long-term impact of either your alternatives, which you won't discuss, or the deals which you are now proposing?

Hon Mr Rae: Obviously, we are considering, as we have considered and will continue to consider, the impacts of any of the proposals that we make, as other governments have had to do. The government of Manitoba, I understand, has reached some agreement with the teachers with respect to unpaid professional development days. Other agreements have been reached in other parts of the country. There's hardly a large organization in the country, indeed a large organization in any of the OECD countries, large bureaucratic organization, whether in the private sector or in the public sector, that hasn't recognized the need for some kind of early retirement proposals.

I'm astonished that the Leader of the Opposition would now be coming out against the possibility of voluntary early retirement as a method of dealing with these issues in a way that's fairer and that has less of a social impact and less of an impact in terms of its effect on younger families and on younger employees and on new employees than the alternatives. If that's now the position of the Liberal Party, that it would rather see wholesale layoffs rather than the kinds of tradeoffs we're proposing, that's very interesting.

I say to the honourable member that I listen very carefully to what she's suggesting. She responds to every headline that's there, she responds to every statement that's made on a daily basis—

The Speaker: Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —and tries to ride the headlines on to a social policy. You can't ride the headlines of the Toronto Star on to a sensible social policy for the people of the province. We don't intend to do it.

The Speaker: New question.

1450

Mrs McLeod: I would just remind the Premier, he is the one who keeps talking about unprecedented negotiations, unprecedented social contracts. We simply ask, at what cost?

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I recognize that all of us tend to be preoccupied with the

events of this week and the social contract talks, but we are going to continue to raise another concern, and that is our concern with the growing crisis of unemployment among our young people.

You have said, when we've raised this question in the past, that you recognize the problem of youth unemployment, that you've responded with a \$180-million commitment to programs for youth. We recognize, however, that the bulk of that budget quite properly is spent on counselling and training programs, such as the Futures programs, established by a previous government. We continue to believe that those are important programs.

The fact is that only about \$25 million in additional funding through the Jobs Ontario Youth program has been provided by your government in new programs for youth. That is welcome, but I am saying to you today that it is not enough, because the reality is that since you've taken office youth unemployment has risen by 8%, to the unprecedented level of 19%. The situation is truly critical. Young people are out there in every community of this province looking for the jobs that they're not finding.

In my own home community, the employment officials are saying that this is the worst summer they have seen in at least seven years. There are fewer employers looking for students for job placements this summer, partly because of the economy, partly because of government job program cutbacks. There are also far more people, laid-off older workers, competing for the jobs.

We've made a number of proposals suggesting that as you redirect some of your Jobs Ontario money, you redirect it particularly to summer job opportunities for youth. I ask you, will you not take immediate steps to address this crisis in a real way? Would you not start by redirecting some additional dollars for summer work opportunities for our young people?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): The first thing I want to say is that at the meeting in Ottawa yesterday the Minister of Finance—I know, because he discussed it with us beforehand—discussed with his colleagues and with the federal Minister of Finance the need for a national strategy, which obviously we would be very interested in participating in, to deal with what is clearly a major challenge and a major problem for us.

I think she will admit that this problem has a national dimension in terms of its impacts. We certainly feel very strongly that the kind of money we've put into the programs the last two years clearly indicates our commitment. We're willing, obviously, to do as much as we possibly can. I've asked my officials to look at the proposals that have come forward from the leader of the Liberal Party and see whether there isn't a way of our improving even on the \$25 million that we've put in.

I'll say to the honourable member that of course we will consider her proposals, recognizing that if you take money out of that particular portfolio, that will mean there will be less money for other programs under the Jobs Ontario programs, which has to be considered. We're looking at her proposals, as we will look at all reasonable proposals that will help us. But it seems to me it would be useful to have some signs of commitment from the federal government with respect to what she would agree, I would hope, is also a national problem.

Mrs McLeod: A national strategy is hardly what I call an immediate response, and it's certainly not going to help all the young people who are being turned away on a daily basis from the youth employment centres.

When you talk about priorities, we keep wanting you to make some linkages, to understand again what you're doing to make matters worse.

Let me give you just one example. The tourism industry, I think you would agree, has always played a large role in creating jobs, and particularly summer jobs for young people. Your budget contains \$30 million in new tax measures that are targeted specifically at the tourism and hospitality sectors. I met with representatives of both the tourism and hospitality industries last week, and they told us that they have no choice but to cut student jobs because of the impact of your budget. These were the same people who were hoping to see some recovery this summer, who were hoping they would be able to hire more people, not less, and you have killed that hope.

I ask why you have targeted these sectors that employ youth through your budget at the very time when our young people need those jobs.

Hon Mr Rae: Perhaps I could ask the honourable member to clarify exactly what tax measures she's referring to, and then she can tell us what the position of the Liberal Party is with regard to those tax expenditures. I want to hear what her definition is of the taxes that we've put in, because if you look, for example, at the impact of the commercial concentration tax alone in terms of the hotel industry in this province, in this part of Ontario, if you look at the impacts of the costs that were imposed by her government on that industry, if you sit down and talk with the hotel industry about the impact of measures that the Liberal government took, then you'll look at them. You tell me what your position is with respect to the other tax changes that were made. You tell me.

Mrs McLeod: I'm not surprised that the Premier needs some clarification in understanding his own budget. He thought it didn't even hurt business, for goodness' sakes. But I'm not going to take the time to clarify. I'd be happy afterwards to talk about the Ontario incredible tax rebate which the government can do by regulation and doesn't even have to bring it to the Legislature, or about the business deductibility, because

I want to ask if the Premier is aware of another factor that is influencing jobs for young people this summer.

Representatives of the city of Windsor have approached us with their concerns about the impact of the expenditure control plan and the social contract talks on student jobs. The city of Windsor, as one example, usually employs 510 students. They fund 300 of those positions directly. This year, because of cutbacks and their uncertainties about the social contract, they are hiring only 93 directly; they've placed a freeze on hiring any new students.

Let me recognize that they do have 178 student placements funded by Jobs Ontario Youth, but city representatives have told us that because of the terms of their local collective agreement if they are forced to lay off even one municipal employee due to spending cuts, all of the students they have hired will have to go first.

Will you acknowledge that your expenditure control plan and your social contract will result in even more job losses for students this summer, that your Jobs Ontario Youth program will not help, and will you will us what action you will take now to prevent this crisis from becoming even greater?

Hon Mr Rae: I'd say to the honourable member that obviously, when we reduce transfers, as we have had to do and as we have done with respect to the municipalities, they are faced with the same sorts of difficult choices as we are. I would suspect that there are members of the Liberal Party who are on city council, as there are members of our party who are on city council and members of the Conservative Party on city council, who are having to make difficult choices in terms of the balance that is struck in every municipal budget.

That's the same balance we have to strike, as she knows, when you have to take responsibility for these things. The kinds of tradeoffs that we're looking at, indeed even at the social contract table, are precisely designed to deal with these kinds of questions.

I just want to get a handle on what the Liberal Party is saying. They're saying, "Reduce the deficit, don't raise any taxes and don't cut any government programs."

It is very difficult, and I don't say this lightly but I will say this directly to the Leader of the Opposition, if you look at what other governments are having to do across the country, the Liberal administration in Quebec, the Liberal administration in New Brunswick, and here we have the Liberal Party in Ontario saying, "We want you to do all these things, Premier: We want you to reduce the deficit, freeze taxes and don't cut any government programs, and voilà, you'll have solved the problems of the province."

I just think the Liberal Party is talking out of every single side of its own hat.

1500

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): Premier, the Globe and Mail today reported that legislation is being drafted in the event that social contract talks fail. It also reports government advisers saying that others would prefer simply to cut back all the transfer partners. I wonder if you could tell us if draft legislation is currently being drafted in the event the social contracts fail, and if so, what's in it.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): You can tell the difference between Liberal research and Tory research. The Liberal research relies on the Star, the Tory research goes to the Globe, and we wish them both well. I would simply say that the answer to his short question is no.

Mr Harris: I'm happy to use the Sun and the Star and anywhere I can get the research. Other headlines say that its settlement is 6 o'clock Friday "or else." Or else what, Premier?

Hon Mr Rae: Or else we will have to find some other way to take the \$2 billion out which we're committed to getting out.

Mr Harris: Do you not think that the talks would go better if you told those at the table, if you were honest, if you were upfront and told them what the "or else" is? Is it legislation? Is it cutbacks on the transfer partners? How are you going to get the \$2 billion if the talks fail? Do you not think you'd have more successful talks if you would be a little more honest and upfront with them and told them what the "or else" is?

Hon Mr Rae: If he's keep asking for my judgement as to how you help the negotiating process—

Mr Harris: The talks aren't going very well.

Hon Mr Rae: I say to the honourable member—he shouted out just now that talks aren't going very well—he may have access to information that no one else in Ontario has; I don't know. My sense is that, given the alternatives which are in front of us, which are, I think, as a province, in terms of the choices between tax increases and expenditure cuts and how else do we get the deficit under control, the methods that we have proposed are fair. They're not easy, but they're fair. My sense is that that realization is growing at the Royal York Hotel, and I remain determinedly optimistic that we're going to find a successful solution to this problem.

ASSISTED HOUSING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): My question is for the Minister of Housing. Three months ago, the Provincial Auditor and the standing committee on public accounts asked her deputy for basic financial information about the non-profit housing program.

We finally received some of that information a few days ago, but the auditor has been told that many answers won't be ready until November: nine months later. Even worse, this ministry is withholding informa-

tion it does possess.

For instance, the ministry won't provide updated estimates of the cost of non-profit housing subsidies, yet when I requested the same information two years ago, I received it the next day. Minister, this is a disgrace. I ask why you and your deputy minister are withholding information from the auditor and the public accounts committee.

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): The member is making an accusation which is not correct. There is no information being withheld whatsoever. The request for information which came as a result of the hearings of the public accounts committee was for very detailed accounting that goes back through the books over years, accounting for the figures within the subsidies provided to non-profit housing corporations.

What the ministry has provided to members of the committee and to the auditor and has discussed with the auditor is the timetable that the ministry is setting out to undertake the quite detailed work which will be involved to provide the definition that she is looking for, that members of the public accounts committee sought and which the ministry is happy to provide and will provide as soon as the work can be done.

Mrs Marland: Maybe what this minister's really saying is that the auditor is lying. The reason I say that is that this answer proves this minister does not have a single clue about what's going on in her ministry.

I'll tell you something else, Madam Minister: If you had been in the public accounts committee you might have heard the auditor say that information he had asked for he was not going to be able to get from your ministry until November.

We know the Ministry of Housing is withholding information, because during the budget lockup a Finance ministry official provided some of the answers in the lockup. For instance, this official said that in 1993-94 the average monthly subsidy for non-profit housing would be \$854 per household. If the Ministry of Housing is unable to provide basic financial information until November, it clearly doesn't care about the cost of doing business. You don't care about getting value for taxpayers' money.

Minister, will you take the reasonable step of halting all further approvals of non-profit housing until your ministry complies with the requests of the Provincial Auditor and the public accounts committee for basic financial information?

Hon Ms Gigantes: It's not difficult at all to provide information at the level that has been quoted by this member, citing information from the Ministry of Finance. That kind of information is available quite readily. What was sought and what is agreed to by the ministry—it will take a lot of work to do—is to provide extremely detailed information, which means reconcili-

ation of figures going back, in some cases, to 1986. Now, this is a task we are willing to take on. We have said to the committee that the ministry will do it. It will take extra resources and we are devoting people to do that.

Mr Speaker, I very much resent her suggestion that I am calling anyone, let alone the Provincial Auditor, a liar. Mr Speaker, I think you should ask her to withdraw that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Just relax. I understand the concern raised by the Minister of Housing. I listened very carefully. The member for Mississauga South did not make an accusation against a member of the House and instead made an accusation by someone who is not here. There's a difference.

Hon Ms Gigantes: If you look at the record, I think you will find that she was suggesting I was calling the Provincial Auditor a liar. Mr Speaker, there was nothing I said that implied—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Sorry; I'll be quite pleased to listen to the point when the House has come to order so that I can hear the point.

Hon Ms Gigantes: Mr Speaker, what was being suggested by the member, and I hope you will take a look at the Hansard, was that I was calling the Provincial Auditor a liar. I did no such thing, nor would I. I think she should have to withdraw that accusation.

The Speaker: I'd be pleased to take a look at Hansard, but the member for Mississauga South, her final supplementary.

Mrs Marland: Minister, you know what I resent? You just told this House what you resent. I resent the fact that you will not defend a program in terms of value for money for the taxpayers in this province today. That's what I resent.

You stand in this House and you piously protect your non-profit housing program. Well, I want to tell you what your non-profit housing program costs the people in this province: It costs \$854 a month to subsidize one household in a non-profit housing building. In contrast, the average monthly shelter subsidy for welfare recipients is \$354 a household. Think about it. With the same amount of money we can help two and a half times more people with a shelter subsidy than with non-profit housing programs.

Minister, you know that government-owned non-profit housing is anything but affordable for the taxpayers of this province, and you know it so well that you will not give the figures. You don't even know the cost of doing business in Ontario today. You won't give those figures to the auditor.

The Speaker: Would the member place a question,

please.

Mrs Marland: I will, Mr Speaker. I can say to the minister when I ask this final question: I can understand your not wanting to answer a question of the opposition, but the fact that you won't answer a question of the Provincial Auditor—I simply say, finally, why won't you cancel the non-profit housing that you haven't built yet and use that money to help the thousands of families on waiting lists, the quarter of a million families in this province that are core needy, with a shelter subsidy and put your money where your mouth is?

1510

Hon Ms Gigantes: First of all, I will repeat again for the benefit of the member, who doesn't seem to hear very well, who's not listening very well, that the ministry has in fact said to the Provincial Auditor that all the information that was requested during the course of the hearings will be provided, has given a detailed plan to the auditor, which, as far as I understand it in conversations between the deputy of Housing and the Provincial Auditor, is a successful and acceptable way of working out the work plan for the provision of this very detailed information, which will be available to the members.

The member for Mississauga South says that I'm unwilling to defend the non-profit housing program. Nothing could be further from the truth. This is a program which gives value for money. We spend \$2.5 billion a year in shelter allowances through the social assistance system in this province.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Gigantes: Yes, Mr Speaker. We spend \$2.5 billion a year in shelter allowances in the social assistance system. That is a rental subsidy program which is much too big. We wish very much that we didn't have to be spending that kind of money, but it's there to assist people who need help in the private market.

We have to increase the supply of affordable housing. The only way to do that is to do non-profit housing which provides a long-run investment in affordable housing in our communities, and it provides jobs while it's getting built.

SOFT DRINK CONTAINERS

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I have a question to the Minister of Environment and Energy. In October 1990 the previous Minister of the Environment reinstated a regulation that at least 30% of soft drinks be sold in refillable containers. You will remember that this announcement was proclaimed with great fanfare as your government's first environmental initiative.

I've received the latest refillable figures from your ministry. They are: October 1992, 6.4%; November, 6.3%; December, 7.8%; January, 7.4%; February, 8.2%;

March, 7%.

My question: Minister, do you support the enforcement of the 30% refillable quota?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I thank my colleague for the question. It's a very important one. He's quite correct: The ratio is well below the required 30% level.

The government supports the 3Rs hierarchy of reduce, reuse and recycle, as he well knows, and the government is reviewing several options with regard to maximizing use of refillable beverage containers and the recovery of all soft drink containers. This is not an easy matter to deal with because the industry has been struggling with this, as well as environmental groups and consumer groups, but I would say that we are actively involved in discussions with the industry and representatives of environmental groups on how we should proceed. Specifically with regard to the question of enforcement, we are actively pursuing that question and we'll be moving forward on that very soon.

Mr Offer: By way of supplementary, on May 4, in response to a question from the member from St Catharines on your commitment to enforcement of regulations, you said, and I quote, that "the cuts we have made have been made in such a way as to ensure that we will carry out our mandate for environmental protection and to ensure that the responsibilities of the Ministry of Environment and Energy are met." You went on to say, "The enforcement branch...is indeed independent and I expect that it will continue to carry out its mandate as it has in the past."

Could you please explain to this House, though your investigations and enforcement branch monitors this situation and is independent, why no charges have been laid since June 1991? Why and who has given the orders to block prosecutions?

Hon Mr Wildman: The question of charges is one that has been considered carefully and the decision was made some time ago and that decision is under review, that we should try to negotiate agreements that would make it possible to resolve this issue without charges if that were an appropriate way to move. However, we are actively considering a number of options.

As the member may know, the ministry has taken a number of initiatives. We've commissioned a study, which was undertaken by Price Waterhouse, on the feasibility of a differential deposit system similar to the one in place in New Brunswick. The study is now being finalized and the results are expected soon. If we cannot arrive at an agreement with the industry that is satisfactory and ensures that we are in fact recovering refillable beverage containers, we will move forward on the question of acting upon the findings of that study.

INSURANCE TAX

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): My question

is for the Premier. As part of the government's recent budgetary tax grab, the government managed to hit Ontarians at every turn. They've increased personal income taxes and surtaxes as well as taxing individual benefits. After all that, when beleaguered taxpayers manage to make it home on their reduced paycheques, this government will tax the insurance they need to drive their cars with and the insurance that protects their homes.

Last week, when the Team Harris tour went across Ontario, our colleagues and I met with insurance brokers—

[Applause]

Mr Cousens: Thank you. We were out listening to the people of Ontario, and insurance brokers are confused and concerned about the implementation of this tax. They don't know how, when or where to implement this tax on insurance, but if they fail to collect it, this government can revoke their ability to do business.

Will you agree that the complexity of educating the insurance industry, as well as allowing them to revamp their entire business practices, requires more time than the time you've given them, and will you agree to extend the collection date from July 1 to August 1 so that this tax can be collected with a minimum of confusion and error?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): In congratulating the member in his successful rise to the role of Finance critic, in what I understand was a bloodless coup within his caucus, I'd like to refer this question to my colleague the Minister of Finance.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): It was a bloodless coup, Bob.

Hon Mr Rae: I heard it was bloodless, anyway.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I appreciate the referral. To the member from Markham, we did send out what's known as a bulletin detailing the tax change to the industry. As a matter of fact, the industry was quite helpful in turn, getting information out to its clients, brokers and so forth, so I think the changes are well understood within the industry. If the member opposite has some information otherwise, I'd appreciate it if he'd let me know because it's my understanding that the industry does comprehend the changes and will be able to effect the changes by July 1.

Mr Cousens: The problem is that there are well over 2,000 agents that have a problem. If it had started out that you as the government had consulted with the industry prior to announcing this tax, it's possible that we would not be facing the kind of confusion that the insurance industry feels today. If you had talked with some of these people, you would have realized that by applying the tax to all payments after July 1, you would be taxing those individuals who are often least able to

afford large premium payments.

Was it your intention to make people pay tomorrow's tax on yesterday's insurance? Would you agree with me that this tax should not be applicable to premium payments for policies which renewed before July 1?

1520

Hon Mr Laughren: The member opposite asks a good question. It was something that I considered, because if someone takes out a new policy after July 1, there is a tax on that premium. On the other hand, if they had a policy before then, or even perhaps before the budget date, the payments that are made on a monthly basis, or a quarterly basis even, would be taxed after July 1, as opposed to people who paid it all first, before the budget date.

I did consider that dilemma, but in the end decided that it was best to leave the tax the way it is. Premiums after July 1 will be taxed even if it's on a monthly or quarterly basis.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. I've been quite disturbed by recent media reports on comments made by some municipal officials that Ontario's welfare system is too rich and that it should be brought in line with neighbouring American states.

These states, as you may recall, are those which have cut back on eligibility for single employable recipients despite the fact that these individuals have little or no prospect for jobs in a recession that has ravaged both the US and Canadian economies. One municipality has directed its staff to investigate changes in the welfare administration in Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Rather than having municipalities across Ontario independently spend valuable staff time and public dollars on such research, could you please clarify for me and for our local governments what measures you are taking to reform and improve the delivery of social assistance in this province and clarify whether it's responsible to harmonize our social assistance system with that of the United States?

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I'm happy to answer that question and say that, first of all, certainly we understand and agree that one of the problems that we need to tackle and that we are tackling in our reform of the social assistance system is to deal with the growing costs. But to suggest for a minute that to resolve those problems in the way that some municipalities are suggesting or, for that matter, what we've seen in some states in the United States, which is to simply arbitrarily remove people from the welfare rolls, is not the solution.

The solution, in our view, rests in assisting people to get jobs and hold jobs and to assist people in a fundamental way in that process. Our intent is to continue

with the reform package and to build, quite frankly, through that reform package on some of the initiatives that are already under way, such as the Jobs Ontario Training programs which are getting people off social assistance and into jobs and which are being supported by such initiatives as the Jobs Ontario child care, with the introduction and addition of 20,000 subsidies over the next few years.

Mrs Mathysen: You've referred to some important things about job creation and helping people in Ontario in a real and practical way. You also mentioned social assistance reform. I'm wondering, Minister, could you please elaborate and explain to me exactly what you have in mind in terms of social assistance reform? Will it be more equitable? How will it be more effective?

Hon Mr Silipo: I hope that in the next number of weeks we will be able to outline in the white paper that we will be making public a document which will set out the government's position on a package of reform, giving a clear indication of the basic framework of a system which we believe needs to be much more active than the passive system that we have in place now, and active in assisting people from the very beginning in getting reoriented towards the workforce, getting back to work, getting the skills that they need, if they are lacking those skills, to get back into the workforce.

We know that's the kind of approach that can achieve both: dealing with the cost issues but, quite frankly and fundamentally, dealing with the basic issue of assisting people to become more self-sufficient and independent and therefore, that way, to be able to look after themselves.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): My question is to the Minister of Labour. Minister, I wonder if you're familiar with this memorandum which was sent out by the two vice-chairs of the Workplace Health and Safety Agency, Mr Forder and Mr McMurdo, to 26,000 business around the province, most of which are small businesses, I might add, outlining to them that they're "pleased to announce health and safety legislation which will have an immediate effect on your organization."

They go on to outline very briefly on the first page the program involvement here and then they say, and I quote from this letter: "Employer liability for violations of the act has increased significantly, possibly resulting in fines of up to \$500,000 for corporations and up to \$25,000 or imprisonment for individuals."

They go on to outline some of the requirements in the health and safety and the training requirements, a bill, I might add, that was brought in for the purpose of improving health and safety in the workplace, not for the purpose of creating the boondoggle that these two gentlemen are creating with this particular letter and with their implementation.

The concerns I have are that they are intimidating. It borders on thuggery for these people to send a letter out to the business community—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member have a question?

Mr Mahoney: —many of whom are trying to find out ways of reducing below the 20-employee level so they can avoid the implementation of this training requirement. Do you agree with the letter that they've sent out, and if not, will you ask the Workplace Health and Safety Agency to send out a following letter apologizing for the tone they've used, for the threats they've issued in this document to the business community, and showing them how they can implement these procedures safely.

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): I want to say that I'm sure the member across the way understands that one of the problems we've had in the province of Ontario as well is that we've had too many injured and killed workers on the job, and one of the things we've done as part and parcel of trying to deal with that is stepped up our enforcement and our charges. I presume that's a part of it. I am not running the agency itself and I haven't seen the letter that the member is referring to right now.

But one of the things that we have decided upon, and it's been a policy for the last several months, is that if we can have better enforcement and the threat of charges—you can't cover every case that comes to your attention—we can more effectively assure that workers are covered and that unsafe conditions are not allowed to exist in the workplace.

Mr Mahoney: That answer somewhat corroborates the suggestion that the next step following this is for training police to be sent out throughout the province going after these business people who are trying to survive the ravages of your Treasurer and your government. You're just going to pile more requirements on top of these people.

One of the requirements in the training in the very first session that has been laid out—and bear in mind, this is for occupational health and safety—is that they will spend a morning learning how laws are made in the Legislature and how to run committee meetings. I don't understand what that has to do with occupational health and safety. It appears to be a complete waste of time for the business community. On top of that, they have to pay \$535 for the one-week program.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Move on and ask a question.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, you tend to want me to speed up. You allow everyone else to take their time. This is important to the business community, which is being intimidated by this government.

They are required to spend \$765 for the two-week

course and \$1,000 for the three-week course. They're going to learn how to pass laws in the Legislature, not how to prevent accidents in the workplace, which is the intent of that legislation.

My supplementary to the minister is, even though you say you're not running it, clearly your government is responsible for the implementation of this legislation by this agency. Will you talk to the co-chairs? Will you ask them to back off and to work cooperatively with the business community so that they know they have two years in which to implement this program and have them help the business community improve health and safety in the workplace?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I'm a little surprised at the member across the way. I've heard him as well express his dissatisfaction with injured and killed workers in the province of Ontario. One of the jobs of the agency was to set in place certification programs so that one worker and one employer were involved in each one of the committees, so that they went through a training process and so that they had the authority to deal with the issues of workplace safety in their plants. The program that was set up, incidentally, was set up, as I'm sure the member knows, by a joint worker-employer committee that set it up and put it in place and is now putting it into practice.

There are 100,000 additional health and safety workers in place in Ontario now and we are already seeing some results in terms of a better health and safety atmosphere in the workplace. I think that's in the interest of workers in the province of Ontario.

1530

EDUCATION POLICY

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): My question is for the Minister of Education and Training. Mr Minister, the Royal Commission on Learning has been given the mandate to assess and make recommendations about the goals, standards and programs to guide Ontario's elementary and secondary schools into the 21st century.

Given that you are already proceeding with destreaming, curriculum reform, grade 9 testing, junior kindergarten and integration, separate from the work of this commission, why are you prepared to wait 18 months for the commission to report?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): All the initiatives that the member has referred to are initiatives that have been in the works for quite a period of time, with the exception of the grade 9 testing. But certainly the destreaming and the junior kindergarten initiatives were actually being worked on by the previous government, so they've been in the works for quite a period of time.

The purpose of the commission is to take a look at trying to develop a consensus around some of the other

questions in education, like governance, like the whole question of philosophy of education in Ontario and the direction the system might go in. That's the purpose of the commission, to take a look at some of the broader questions, the broader questions of accountability, to try to develop a consensus, or as much of a consensus as possible, for future directions in education.

Mrs Cunningham: Given the minister's response, I think I'll ask him the same question but in a different manner. I think that really what we're concerned about is a duplication. We have all of these programs moving forward. We appreciate that the minister feels it's important to do this. We also have a problem in getting ourselves coordinated and streamlined around such issues as destreaming and junior kindergarten. Grade 9 testing would be a good example, the whole issue of testing.

If in fact we have, already, five studies completed since 1986, and the minister is very much aware of those recommendations, and if in fact everyone agrees that we're drowning in a sea of reports with regard to education, the question is this: If in fact you do have some work done in these areas, if in fact the commission is ready to report, will you ask the commission to report, at least, on the issues of destreaming, special education, grade 9 testing, the whole issue of testing, before the 18 months are up? Because they in fact will report on the testing issue next spring and we could at least get that issue satisfied without waiting perhaps two years and into the next election, would you at least ask them to report on some issues earlier than the 18 months?

Hon Mr Cooke: I think she will understand that the commission is appointed under the Public Inquiries Act, that the commissioners are appointed by order in council and that the commission is in fact an independent commission.

Certainly, when I spoke to the co-chairs of the commission, I indicated to them that if they wanted to proceed with interim reports, we would be more than happy to receive any interim reports and specific recommendations before the 18 months. But in the meantime, we are already taking some actions.

The grade 9 testing is only one part of the whole evaluation package that was announced on that same day, the testing in mathematics and so forth that's taking place at grades 3, 6 and 9 under the package that's associated with the common curriculum. We've moved forward with the rewrite of the common curriculum. I think there are a lot of issues that we can move forward and need to move forward on anyway—

The Speaker: Could the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Cooke: —and I think the member would agree with that.

I think the member would also understand that one of the criticisms that we've received, and strong suggestions, is that we should not stop any reform of the education system, that we should continue to move forward and not use the commission as an excuse to stay still. We don't intend to use the commission as an excuse.

The Speaker: Could the minister please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Cooke: We intend to bring in reforms while the commission continues to operate.

RECOGNITION OF TORONTO BLUE JAYS

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Mr Speaker, you will note, as will every other member in this place, that our dream team, the Toronto Maple Leafs, is being honoured today at Nathan Phillips Square for the wonderful season that it had this year. Regrettably, they just came short of winning the prize.

My question to the minister has to do with the other team that's in Toronto, the Toronto Blue Jays, who last year had a wonderful season. I'll have you know, Mr Speaker, that these teams are ambassadors for this city.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member have a question?

Mr Perruzza: Yes. These teams do honour to us when they travel abroad, and they advertise our city and our province and they draw much in the way of tourism. However, it is time that we do some honour back to both the Blue Jays and the Toronto Argonauts.

My question to the minister is, why, almost a year after winning the World Series championship, is there no signage and is there no recognition that Toronto is home to the Blue Jays, the World Series champions?

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): We did, in the collective, agonize a bit, because our Leafs did very well, and I, for one, being a native Montrealer, was looking so much forward to the first game. I understand the first game of the final is tonight. It will be played in the temple in Montreal and I too was looking forward to this great finale. One team that did better, did us proud, was the Toronto Blue Jays: for the first time ever, at the major league level, world champions.

I must remind, with respect, the member for Downsview that the city of Toronto has not yet requested the kind of road signage that the member for Downsview is asking for. The Ministry of Transportation will be meeting with city officials, and it's a good opportunity to discuss this matter. Until that time, obviously I will not—I cannot—commit myself to any signage to a facility, a club, an organization and, unfortunately, not even the Blue Jays, but maybe in the future.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I will recognize the member for

Quinte with a question.

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): If I could have her attention, my question is the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Downsview on a point of order?

Mr Perruzza: Mr Speaker, wouldn't I be entitled to a supplementary question?

The Speaker: In the interest of balance, the member will recall that at the beginning of question period we lost a considerable amount of time, not your fault or the fault of the opposition. I would draw the member's attention to the standing order that speaks of urgent public importance.

I listened carefully to his question. It would seem that it did not require a supplementary. Instead, I am recognizing the member for Quinte with a question, but no supplementary. The member for Quinte would please place his question.

Mr O'Neil: Actually, Mr Speaker, I had a supplementary too. I'll try to work it into one question.

1540

The Speaker: A point of order?

Mr Perruzza: Mr Speaker, I listened closely to your explanation and I can't in any way, shape or form see how you could anticipate what my supplementary question would be. In being able to rule or advise me that my supplementary question is not required, I find that rather awkward.

Mr Speaker, the past several days—and this is further on a point of principle, a point which I should have raised earlier today. You will note, if you check today's Hansard, by way of a point of principle now, that yesterday as the House was adjourning, the member for Scarborough North asked that the House retire early. The Speaker in the chair at that moment ruled and asked for unanimous consent.

After having checked Hansard today—and I note that I objected vehemently to giving unanimous consent—at that time, my objection to adjourning the House was completely neglected and in fact is not even recorded in Hansard today. So I'd like to get that objection on the record, and in light of that—

The Speaker: The member for Downsview, just—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Just relax.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The last thing that members want is complete disorder in here. The member for Quinte will have his question. The member for Downsview is obviously exercised about this. He feels that his supplementary is of urgent public importance. I ask the member to succinctly place his question and trust that

it will be of urgent public importance.

Mr Perruzza: Mr Speaker, you will know that everything we do is of urgent public importance.

The Speaker: Does the member have a supplementary?

Mr Perruzza: My supplementary question to the minister is, will he engage the mayors in the city of Toronto as quickly as possible and apprise them of the fact that our ambassadors abroad, people who sell this city and sell the people of this city and this province and advertise us abroad—will the minister get in touch with the mayors to ensure that the people who are ambassadors abroad are properly recognized as such?

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon Mr Pouliot: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I share in your dilemma, for I too find the question to be important and certainly issue-related and therefore relevant.

We will be meeting this month. These are the people from the Ministry of Transportation. They will be meeting with the municipality of Toronto and with the municipalities that form the greater Toronto area, and the opportunity will be at this meeting to prepare a program that will highlight the successes and hence the possibility of telling the world, in fact, that the Toronto Blue Jays were indeed the 1992 world champion.

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: With respect, I think it would be easier on members in this chamber if there was some consistency in your rulings.

Earlier today, you denied fundamental democratic and parliamentary rights to my colleague the member from Etobicoke West. Yesterday, you wouldn't allow a supplementary to my question, even though the time for question period had just expired a second before I was to get up and give my supplementary. Today, you allow a supplementary and a point of order and a point of privilege and I guess a point of principle from the member from Downsview which I think was of dubious public importance.

You would not hear the point of privilege by my colleague from Etobicoke West. You deny my supplementary. Now you're letting the Liberal Party have a supplementary well after the time, several minutes after the expiry of the normal time for question period.

I'd simply ask you to check your drinking water, Mr Speaker. There doesn't seem to be any consistency in your rulings.

The Speaker: To the member for Simcoe West, I certainly appreciate that all members who are on the question period list wish an opportunity to ask their questions. He will note that at the beginning of question period some seven minutes elapsed while certain members in the chamber did not allow the Leader of the Opposition to place a question. I said at the time I

would attempt, in an effort to provide balance, an opportunity to recoup some of that time. It was not possible to recoup all of the seven minutes, by no means.

The member for Downsview was concerned that he had asked a question and before the time had expired he was not going to be allowed a supplementary, so therefore I allowed a brief supplementary. I have told the member for Quinte he can place a question but no supplementary, in order to try and provide some balance.

Quite frankly, had there been order and decorum in this chamber at the beginning of oral questions, it would not have been necessary for the Speaker to try to find a way to provide balance so that all sides have an equal opportunity. Such was not the case today. Hopefully, the situation will improve for tomorrow's oral questions.

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): On a point of order, Mr Speaker. I'm going to tell you I don't do this lightly, but I take great exception to the remarks that you just made. If this party and this government and this government House leader would have some respect, one ounce of respect, for 126 years of tradition in this country and this province, we wouldn't be in the mess, and I can tell you tomorrow will be worse than today unless he smartens up. Enough said. It's a bunch of bullshit.

The Speaker: To the member for Parry Sound, I understand his concerns and that's why twice earlier today I offered to try to be of assistance with the three House leaders so that we can have a more constructive atmosphere in this chamber. I understand his point full well.

The member for Quinte.

Mr O'Neil: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and, hopefully, I'm that balance.

TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I have a question for the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation in her capacity of handling the tourism business in the province of Ontario. Minister, on May 19, the NDP budget dealt a devastating blow to tourist operators and small businesses already reeling from the recession. By bringing down the biggest tax grab in Ontario's history, the NDP budget's \$2-billion tax grab hurts tourism, hurts small business and kills jobs.

Interjection.

Mr O'Neil: Mr Speaker, if the Treasurer would keep quiet, I'd finish my question.

Tourism has been, and I stress "has been," Ontario's fourth-largest export industry, generating more than \$16.9 billion in revenues for provincial coffers, and it is the province's biggest service sector employer. Yet it has lost more than 62,000 jobs in the last three years and in 1992 bankruptcies in the Ontario tourism indus-

try increased by 39%.

Minister, Ontario's tourist operators—and I believe you know this—and the small businesses throughout the province were looking to this budget for a sign of hope. This budget gave them no hope. How do you propose to assist these small business people and especially those people in the tourism business, and how do you propose to assist them right now?

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I'm happy to inform the member from Quinte that I had a meeting with the executive of Tourism Ontario yesterday, and I believe that at the conclusion of the meeting they were left with a much stronger feeling of the kind of hope that in fact I have with this budget, that in fact it does mean good news to the tourism industry.

I want to share with the member from Quinte two clarifications I was able to give to the members of the executive of Tourism Ontario. First, in terms of the visitors' rebate program, it will continue with regard to the purchase of goods where a single receipt shows the purchase of over \$625 on that one receipt. Also, in terms of the reduction of the entertainment tax deduction, that applies only to incorporated businesses, which means that effectively for small business that is still very good news and therefore good news in the tourism industry.

Further to that, in terms of the positive aspects, I was able to share with them the fact that the elimination of the commercial concentration tax means \$13.5 million, effectively as a tourism program, injected not only into the Metro economy, because of what that means to hotels and restaurants, but because Metro is a gateway for tourism to the province, it also means effectively a \$13.5-million tourism program to inject into the tourism industry in this province.

In terms of how difficult a fiscal situation this government is dealing with right now, I think they also appreciated the fact that we maintained the hotel sales tax at 5%. We continued the exemption on the entertainment tax for theatres of less than 3,200, which means excellent news for the tourism theatre passport program in this province.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Swarbrick: We've put \$300 million into the Jobs Ontario community action, which in some communities will be used to help enhance tourism in those communities. The Jobs Ontario transportation, highways and subways expansion means tremendous news for the enticement and encouragement of tourism in this province, making it easy for tourists to get around this province, through this city.

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Swarbrick: The fact that we've got the kind of money into Jobs Ontario training that we do, for the Ontario Tourism Education Council among them, which is the first time any government in this province has effectively delivered an apprenticeship training program for the tourism hospitality industry, is tremendous news that they very much appreciate. The fact that we've got a tourism sectoral strategy going ahead—

The Speaker: Would the minister please take her seat.

Interjection.

The Speaker: I ask the minister to please take her seat.

The time for oral questions has expired.

1550

USE OF QUESTION PERIOD

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I have a question to place to the Minister of Tourism with respect to the budget that I've been trying to place since May 20. You've allowed the Liberal Party a fifth question and I would like to present my question at this time to the minister.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member has one avenue, and that is unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid not.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: My colleague from Simcoe West just stood up and said that there's no consistency in the rulings that you make in this place. There is also, Mr Speaker, with respect, no consistency in the way you operate, even when you're not making rulings. If you allow a fifth question, 15 minutes after question period ends, for the Liberal Party, why can you not allow a fifth question for our party 15 or 20 minutes after the question period ends? Why do you wait until question period expires to decide that question period will continue for them but question period will not continue for us?

The precedents that you set have to be consistent, Mr Speaker. You know, if anything, the way this place has operated this afternoon—it has operated in the most haphazard way possible; it's operated in a way that has been inconsistent from one moment to the next and perhaps that's why, with respect, there's been no control with what's gone on here.

I submit to you, sir—

The Speaker: Would the member please take his seat. Of course, consistency is important. Also, decorum is important. I dealt with the matters raised earlier by the honourable member for Simcoe West. I appreciate the fact that all members have questions which they wish to place. Quite frankly, during most question periods, if members would be more succinct in both the questions and responses, we would have more questions each day. Often, that isn't possible and that's quite

regrettable, but hopefully, members will attempt to be more orderly in the way in which they conduct the business in the House.

A new point of order? The member for Wellington with his new point of order.

Mr Arnott: Mr Speaker, you have not addressed the basic point that was made by the member for Willowdale. How can you justify the inconsistency between allowing the Liberal caucus a fifth question and not the third party a fifth question?

The Speaker: The member for Wellington may not have been in the chamber at the time when the matter was raised by his colleague the member for Simcoe West. I dealt with it at that time.

PETITIONS

LIBRARY GRANTS

Mr Frank Mclash (Kenora): I have a petition from the board of the Dryden Public Library. It reads:

"To the province of Ontario and the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation:

"Whereas northern Ontario libraries serve a unique population, a population residing in unorganized townships, and northern Ontario libraries receive no provincial support in the form of the per-household grant; and

"Whereas the residents of the unorganized townships pay the same provincial taxes as other residents of Ontario but are presently denied the opportunity to have a portion of those taxes applied to the libraries serving them; and

"Whereas equity of access to the public library system for the residents of the unorganized townships is jeopardized under the present system of funding,

"Therefore, the board of the Dryden Public Library petitions the province of Ontario and the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation to extend the system of per-household grants to those libraries serving residents of the unorganized townships."

I have attached my name to that as well.

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1923, seven Ontario bands signed the Williams Treaty, which guaranteed that native peoples would fish and hunt according to provincial and federal conservation laws, like everyone else; and

"Whereas the bands were paid the 1993 equivalent of \$20 million; and

"Whereas that treaty was upheld by Ontario's highest court last year; and

"Whereas Bob Rae is not enforcing existing laws which prohibit native peoples from hunting and fishing out of season; and

"Whereas this will put at risk an already pressured

part of Ontario's natural environment,

"We, the undersigned, adamantly demand that the government honour the principles of fish and wildlife conservation; to respect our native and non-native ancestors and to respect the Williams Treaty."

That's 118 signatures, and I've signed it.

GAMBLING

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of a neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

That is signed by approximately 123 residents of Woodstock and Norwich township and there's even one individual from Brantford who signed this as well.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition here signed by 10 local presidents of OPSEU, who represent over 1,000 members in the Cornwall area. The petition reads:

"We, the undersigned Cornwall and area presidents of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, representing over 1,000 local OPSEU members, ask you to relay to the government of Ontario the strongest protest to proposed cutbacks to the Ontario Public service in the Cornwall area.

"We hope you will agree that investing in jobs is crucial for recovery in this area and this is no time for further cutbacks in Cornwall."

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition and it reads as follows:

"To the members of provincial Parliament:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate

Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and will cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I totally support this petition and I've affixed my signature to it.

GAMBLING

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I have a petition from 49 people in my riding to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTAL VICTORY BOND PROGRAM

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I have a petition petitioning the Parliament to create this week an opportunity to debate the merits of a proposal entitled the economic environmental victory bond program as an alternative to the social contract legislation, and I hereby file it.

GAMBLING

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I have a petition here and it's about gambling.

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures;"—something, I might add, this government used to believe in—"and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor;"—something Bob Rae probably said just a few short years ago—"and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has been in the past vociferously opposed"—I'm certain they were thinking of the Premier—"to the raising of moneys for the state through gambling;"—a policy of this party, no doubt, a policy written in its books—"and"—

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): These are petitions as they are submitted, please.

Mr Stockwell: I'm just trying to put it in layman's terms for the members opposite.

"Whereas the government has not

attempted"—emphasis on "attempted"—"to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,"—have not attempted to hear from these people about the very serious growth in crime—

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows"—and I might add, there is a significant number of signatures here from Etobicoke and parts north, south, east and west.

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos"—like they said they would before the election—"and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals"—like they said they would before the election—"in the province of Ontario."

1600

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): Why are you doing this? I just read the same one. It takes me two seconds.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Mills: You are wasting time.

The Acting Speaker: Order, the member from Durham East.

Please, I would ask respectfully that you provide as was submitted on the petition.

Mr Stockwell: I'm very sorry if I took too much time trying to inform the government of what the people in this province really think. Mr Speaker, that was the conclusion. If he hadn't interrupted, I would have been done long ago. I sign my name to this petition and forward it to the Clerk's table. Thank you for your patience.

GAMBLING

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before.

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to

establish gambling casinos."

This is signed by about 60 members of my constituency, and I have attached my name.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition that is addressed to the members of provincial Parliament and it concerns another policy flip-flop by the NDP government and party. It says:

"Re amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, proposed wide-open Sunday shopping and elimination of Sunday as a legal holiday.

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of "legal holiday" in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter, 51 Sundays per year, from the definition of "legal holiday" and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

That's signed by a number of good people from the riding of Wellington, which is represented ably by my colleague Mr Arnott, and I've signed my name to this petition.

GRAVENHURST OPERA HOUSE

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): I have another petition from a number of people in the Gravenhurst area concerned about the opera house closure. The opera house was closed by the Ministry of Labour, and they feel that the government should provide full funding for the restoration of the opera house in the immediate future.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): A petition to the honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and Grenville, members of Ontario Public Service Employees Union Local 439, employed at the Sherwood Park Manor in Brockville, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it, and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector, and the strengthening of public services."

Signed by approximately 100 employees of Sherwood

Park. I've affixed my signature in support.

GAMBLING

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): I was sent this petition and I assume that they wanted me to read it in the House. It's signed by a number of people in my riding and some outside my riding, and it reads as follows, addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling;"—and it cites a document from which that was extracted—"and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I submit that.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a petition of 117 signatures addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Bill 164 penalizes safe, conscientious drivers for high-risk drivers;

"Whereas other sections of the proposed bill are also objectionable and will also increase insurance rates; and

"Whereas we are opposed to the changes that will increase the premiums of those with good driving records, such as women and seniors,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to withdraw Bill 164."

I have placed my signature to that petition.

GAMBLING

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have another petition from 19 residents who are all in the Brooksdale area, I assume either with the Brooksdale United Church or the Brooksdale Women's Institute. This petition also says that these people are petitioning to oppose establishing gambling casinos in the province of Ontario.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I have a

petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operations of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from the introduction of video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

There are many people from the Orillia area, Oro Station and Udney who have signed their names to this petition, and I submit it with my signature.

1610

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

EMPLOYER HEALTH TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR L'IMPÔT PRÉLEVÉ SUR LES EMPLOYEURS
RELATIF AUX SERVICES DE SANTÉ

On motion by Mr Laughren, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 27, An Act to amend the Employer Health Tax Act and the Workers' Compensation Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'impôt prélevé sur les employeurs relatif aux services de santé et la Loi sur les accidents du travail.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the Treasurer have a short summary of his bill?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Yes, I do, Mr Speaker. I appreciate that opportunity.

This bill effects the changes which I announced in the 1992 and 1993 budgets. Employers who have to pay the employer health tax have been helping to support our health care system since 1990. However, individuals who earn self-employment income, such as self-employed business people and professionals, have not been required to pay the employer health tax on their business income. This bill will correct this situation by requiring self-employed individuals whose net self-employment income exceeds \$40,000 to pay their fair share of health care costs.

The employer health tax paid by employers is a deductible expense for income tax purposes. For self-employed individuals, the tax is not deductible. To offset the non-deductibility, self-employed individuals will receive a tax reduction of 22% of the tax otherwise payable.

The bill also contains several amendments of an administrative nature.

NIAGARA ESCARPMENT PROTECTION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LA PROTECTION
DE L'ESCARPEMENT DU NIAGARA

On motion by Mr Murdoch, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 28, An Act to revise the Law relating to the Protection of the Niagara Escarpment and the Surrounding Wetlands / Loi révisant la loi concernant la protection de l'escarpement du Niagara.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): This bill repeals the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act. The bill provides for the designation of the Niagara Escarpment and surrounding wetlands as a natural area. The designation can only be made if it is approved by each municipality within the area to be designated. Development in the natural area is prohibited unless approved by the municipality where the land is situated and the assembly.

If the natural boundaries of the Niagara Escarpment and the surrounding wetlands change, then the boundaries of the natural area can also be changed. The changes to the boundaries of the natural area must be approved by the municipality affected and by the assembly.

By passage of this bill, we can save the province approximately \$4 million; therefore I would ask for unanimous consent for second and third reading.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): I appreciate those comments and we will proceed.

BUDGET STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN FONCTION DU BUDGET

On motion by Mr Laughren, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 29, An Act to amend certain Acts to eliminate the Commercial Concentration Tax, reduce certain expenditures and provide for the increase of certain revenues as referred to in the 1993 Budget / Loi modifiant certaines lois afin d'éliminer l'impôt sur les concentrations commerciales, de réduire certaines dépenses et de prévoir l'augmentation de certaines recettes comme le prévoit le budget de 1993.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): This bill amends 14 acts to effect expenditure reduction and revenue-raising measures referred to in the budget. In addition, the bill eliminates the commercial concentration tax this year and implements expenditure reduction

measures announced last April as part of this government's deficit reduction strategy.

RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LA TAXE DE VENTE AU DÉTAIL

On motion by Mr Laughren, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 30, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la taxe de vente au détail.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Would the Treasurer have some brief remark?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): This bill, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act, 1993, affects the changes announced in the May 19 Ontario budget. In order to support the government's commitment to reduce the provincial deficit, this bill proposes the imposition of tax on the following: contracts of insurance, group insurance, funded or unfunded benefit plans, parking, sand, gravel, clay, soil and unfinished stone, beer or wine produced in a producer-owned establishment. In addition, the \$5 tire tax on new tires will be removed and the Ontario—Incredible rebate program will be eliminated.

This bill also introduces amendments which will improve the overall administration and enforcement of the Retail Sales Tax Act.

INCOME TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI
DE L'IMPÔT SUR LE REVENU

On motion by Mr Laughren, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 31, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act / Loi modifiant la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Would the Treasurer have some opening remarks?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): This bill, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act, 1993, implements the proposals announced in the May 19 budget. This bill contains amendments which will increase the rate of Ontario personal income tax to 58% of basic federal tax for 1993 and following years, impose a surcharge for the 1993 tax year equal to 17% of Ontario personal income tax over \$5,500 plus an additional 8% of Ontario personal income tax over \$8,000. For 1994 and following years, the surcharge will increase to 20% of Ontario personal income tax over \$5,500 and an additional 10% of Ontario personal income tax over \$8,000, and ensure that the Income Tax Act for Ontario adopts certain definitions and provisions from the Income Tax Act Canada as required under the tax collection agreement.

I would like to add that a regulation made under this act will provide a substantial increase to the Ontario tax reduction program. The basic amount available for Ontario residents will increase to \$205 from \$175. The

amounts that Ontario residents can claim for each dependent child under 19 and each dependent with a disability will increase to \$395 from \$375.

1620

ORDERS OF THE DAY

RETAIL BUSINESS HOLIDAYS
AMENDMENT ACT (SUNDAY SHOPPING), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LES JOURS FÉRIÉS
DANS LE COMMERCE DE DÉTAIL
(OUVERTURE DES COMMERCE LE DIMANCHE)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail en ce qui concerne l'ouverture des commerces le dimanche.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The honourable member for Etobicoke West had the floor and may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): This is not the debate that I think the people of the province of Ontario want this Legislature to be taking up today. This is a disappointing day when after introducing a budget with the largest tax grab in the history of this province, bar none—

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): In 1981 you did the same.

Mr Stockwell: I hear the heckling from the Treasurer—the largest tax grab in the history of this province, bar none, that we—

Interjections.

Mr Stockwell: Well, Mr Speaker, maybe the question should be put to the Treasurer: In 1981, when they did have a reasonably high tax grab, answer me, how many days did they debate the budget? How many days did they debate that budget? I don't have those figures in front of me, but I'll be willing to wager it was a heck of a lot more than two days that you've allowed us to debate this \$2-billion increase.

The argument is made, "There's lots of time." The same argument was made last year when Mr Cooke was the House leader for this government. There was lots of time to debate that budget when they had a deficit number that was concocted in the back rooms of the finance department that had no resemblance to reality. When they brought back in the revenue figures, that number was proven to be absolutely and categorically concocted by this government. What did we have last year in the way of debate? At the very same time they were suggesting, "We can debate this lots; there's lots of time in the future," we had two days of debate on that budget as well.

They've applied somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$22 billion or \$23 billion in debt to this province and

have institutionalized a double-digit deficit. They've taxed them \$2 billion plus and we've got a collective total of four days debate in this Legislature on those kinds of horrific tax grabs that this government has introduced that are pounding whatever weak and mild recovery we might have had.

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): A hundred thousand people have just closed off their TVs.

Mr Stockwell: A hundred thousand people, according to the member from I'm not sure where, but it won't be much longer, have closed off their TVs. That is really unbelievable to come from a member of the government side. What the people want—

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member for Durham East, on a point of order.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): Mr Speaker, are we not debating or supposed to be debating Bill 38? I just wondered the relevance of what the member for Etobicoke is talking about to Bill 38. We are on a time basis here. Everybody's fed up with his wasting their time.

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member from Durham East has a heck of a lot of nerve getting up in this Legislature and trying to, again as the Speaker did during question period, suppress the democratic rights of the member from Etobicoke West to speak out on behalf of his constituents. He must speak about the budget now and Bill 38. The two are related, as is all legislation in this House, as it's presented by the government in draconian manner. He has the right to do that. I would hope that members of the government side will not interfere with his democratic rights as they've done, because you know, Mr Speaker, that the government is trying to suppress us and only allowing two days—

The Acting Speaker: Order. The honourable member is not in his seat and it is not a point of order. We will continue with the member for Etobicoke West on Bill 38.

Mr Stockwell: Considering the fact that there might be 10 members of the government here—nine members of the government, not a quorum, Mr Speaker—in this House at all, considering we've got 10 members, and now they have such a low number of members who even bother showing up to listen to the opposition concerns and the people's concerns and criticisms about this government, they then have the nerve to stand up and start telling members opposite what they're allowed and what they're not allowed to speak about.

First a quorum's got to be called when you've only got nine government members. I will call a quorum and tell them: "People want to speak to you about this budget. Maybe you should listen up."

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present? A quorum is not present. Call in the members.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is now present, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum now is present. The honourable member for Etobicoke West can resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Stockwell: What a folly this government is. The members are now chomping in here, chiding me as they go by. I'm certain that the chiding you're getting in your riding is not from the people asking you about whether or not Sunday shopping legislation is being introduced. I'm sure the chiding that you're getting back in your home ridings has a lot to do with the \$2-billion tax grab that you just pilfered out of the Ontario public, crushing any hope of any possible return—

Mr Paul Klopp (Huron): Your nose is growing.

Mr Stockwell: Oh, and this member talks about their nose growing. Listen, my friend, you people have no room to talk. I look to the minister of northern affairs about whether or not they're telling the truth to the people in this province. I think you should save that comment because you've no room to start measuring whether or not we believe that people want to hear about the budget being debated today.

Sunday shopping—we can debate the budget on Sunday. I think that's a perfectly good and acceptable thing to do. The people in this province want to hear this budget debated. They want to hear why it's so important for you to gouge \$2 billion out of their paycheques when they've got precious little to spend. I think they'd be prepared to come in here and watch these debates take place on a Sunday. I think they'd be prepared to see them take place on a Saturday, or a Thursday evening, or a Friday. I think they'd be prepared to hear about why this party thinks it's justifiable to go about and gouge the public out there, who are trying to rebuild this economy, kill 50,000 jobs, talk about a 5% increase on insurance premiums.

And you know, the killer on that, it's not like insurance is an option; it's not like you have a choice to buy car insurance or not. It's something you have to have to drive a car in this province, and I think most people would think it's a reasonable request that the government of the day introduce legislation to make it mandatory to have drivers in this province have insurance. But the problem is, Mr Speaker, through you to this government and Treasurer in particular, there isn't an option on this. You just slammed another 5% increase on the people who drive in this province to pay more to the government because they have to buy car insurance.

It's not a reasonable thing to do. It's not like you're taxing the rich. It's not like you're taxing those who can afford it. You know full well, Mr Speaker, that most people in this province who are employed own a car, outside of the selective urban centres in this province,

particularly those in rural ridings or in smaller-town Ontario. You know full well that they must own cars or trucks if they're going to go around, get around, get their kids to school, buy groceries.

How do you treat these people who need these vehicles to get around? You slap a 5% increase on a mandatory insurance program that they have no control over, that they must pay—regressive, unfair, for the most inexpensive car to the most expensive car. How is that going to rebuild this crumbling economy?

Hon Mr Laughren: GST.

Mr Stockwell: Now the Treasurer starts yapping about the GST. This is the same Treasurer who in opposition was talking about the problems of the government. He becomes Treasurer, finally begins to realize that those simple—

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: Here goes the member from I'm not sure where again, but I don't have to worry about it for much longer. But the Treasurer, who in opposition seemed to have all the answers to the economic woes, now comes up yesterday in the newspaper and he blames this economic problem that this province is in on the Bank of Canada.

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: Now he's denying. He's saying we can get this economy jump-started; we need lower interest rates; we need a better money policy. What this province needs is a government that is prepared to govern in a sane and rational manner.

[Applause]

Mr Stockwell: Thank you, because I'll tell you something, folks, I can't believe you're not hearing this. I can't believe your constituents are not coming to you, who didn't come to you last week in your constituency offices and tell you how oppressive this increase in taxes is going to be to them. I cannot believe that the only people who are hearing about this tough budget, this tax grab of \$2 billion, is this caucus right here. You're never going to convince me that your constituents aren't coming to you and telling you that you should never have increased the taxes and left them in a very awkward and untenable position, considering we were building a fragile hope that this economy might turn around.

We know what the people are saying. We know what the people were saying in Don Mills. We know what the people were saying in St George-St David. What they were saying is that this government has been reduced to a fringe-party status; 8% of the popular vote reduces you to a fringe-party status. Take my word for it, after this introduction of this budget and your \$2-billion tax grab, however low you were in those two by-elections, you'd simply be lower. This is fiscal folly. It is absolute and total fiscal folly.

1630

Yes, the deficit is a problem. Yes, the deficit must be dealt with, and yes, there are many ways to deal with this deficit. But the one way that you shouldn't have tried to deal with this deficit was ask the beleaguered taxpayer of this province, who is probably taxed as high as any jurisdiction in North America, to come up with an additional \$2 billion.

It would seem to me that any democratic, elected government, after introducing a \$2-billion tax grab, would at least have the courage to stand up in this place, the Legislature, and allow the opposition parties and the people from the ridings we represent to be heard on why this budget is the wrong way to go.

Previous governments allowed opportunity for opposition parties to state their case and offer solutions to the government on previous budgets. They did so because it was a time-honoured tradition of this House. It was a time-honoured tradition that a number of days be set aside so this place could be a place where we may debate and measure the merits of Sunday shopping, of—

The Acting Speaker: Order. The honourable member for Durham Centre.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order simply because this member has been speaking for 20 minutes about a revenue bill that is not before us, about a budget which is not before us for debate. What we're talking about is a common pause day or Sunday shopping, an issue which is central to many families and many communities in our province. I would ask that he return to that debate, sir.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. I want to remind the honourable member for Etobicoke West, it is Bill 38 that we are debating.

Mr Stockwell: Just as the member from Durham rose in his place, I was speaking about Sunday shopping. I had just in fact said the words "Sunday shopping." Now, I would ask the member to pay attention, because if you're going to stand up on a point of order—

Mr White: Where is that in Hansard?

Mr Stockwell: See, he doesn't even know; he's checking Hansard. If you're going to stand up on a point of order, at least get the little infinitesimal facts you're going to stand up on straight. So next time you're going to stand, check the record. I was in fact speaking about Sunday shopping.

What I had said about Sunday shopping and this budget debate we're not going to have was that I think people would be very prepared to allow this Legislature to sit on Sunday so opposition would get the opportunity to express to the member from Durham and his constituents how opposed we are to this tax-grab gouge that you're partaking of on behalf of the constituents in the province of Ontario.

It would seem to me that it would be reasonable, considering this government allows people to shop on Sunday, that if you can't find time in your busy schedule to allow this Legislature to debate one of the most important pieces of legislation, the 1993 budget, then we should probably come back on Sunday, because you gave up that value this year or last year. As a principle that you staked your party platform on, it was worthless. So we can probably come in Sunday safely assured that you'll all be here, because we know you don't believe in a common pause day any more.

So it makes sense to me, if we debate today the merits of Sunday shopping or the merits of this budget, we can certainly tie it back together so that we can at least have some comment on this mess concocted by the Treasurer, who has difficulty in simple addition when it comes to deficit numbers, that we can at least have an opportunity to debate it here in the House.

The last time I was speaking was before the budget was introduced. At that time I was gleefully going through some comments made by the now Premier, then Leader of the Opposition, on his position on Sunday shopping. He spoke to this Legislature on second and third reading on the legislation of Sunday shopping introduced by the Liberals. It was the domino Sunday shopping effect.

At the time the Premier had a very different position on Sunday shopping than he has today. It has changed so dramatically that by in fact reading these speeches into the record it's very hard to believe that it's the same person who is today introducing legislation to do away with a common pause day.

He had all kinds of reasons. Nobody owed their life to the employer. Nobody owed their life to work. There are other things to do in life besides work, work, work. He said he used to go and visit his constituents and have a drink of wine on Sundays, and if you introduced Sunday shopping, he couldn't do that and the fabric of society would break down and all these horrific things. This is what the guy said in opposition, sitting right over there as Leader of the Opposition. He had such a firm and committed speech, and you thought, "Gee, here's a guy who's just thoroughly convinced that by endorsing this Sunday shopping, as introduced by the Legislature, you would cut away at the very fabric in the province of Ontario."

He must, I expect, still have some in his caucus who are opposed to Sunday shopping, a few who are holding out in the hope that the rest of their caucus will come to their senses rather than being bought off for parliamentary assistant jobs and chairman jobs. But I don't necessarily believe that'll be the case.

But, as you can see, Mr Rae, during this debate, was speaking and said, "Surely, if one genuinely wanted to be modern or contemporary, one would be talking about ways we can ensure that people should be working less.

I believe profoundly"—now get this. Here he is saying, "I believe profoundly." When you say that, you've got to think: "This person really believes what he's saying. There's nothing that's going to change his mind."

"I believe profoundly that people should not be working for...as many hours as they are required to work today. I believe profoundly that we should not only be talking about making Sunday a day of rest; we should talk about making Saturday a day of rest." I commented at the time that he's not only made Sunday and Saturday a rest for 300,000 people, but he's made Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday a day of rest for those people as well.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): It's already in Hansard.

Mr Stockwell: It is already, but I thought that it was just so important to get this again on the record for public consumption that we can measure just exactly the amount of change, the complete abdication of principle that has taken place from Mr Rae on this side of the House and Mr Rae on that side of the House. It is breathtaking. Some would say it's sickening, but it's at least breathtaking.

He goes on, "I say to Mel Lastman"—and here he is. He just didn't pick on the people in the Legislature here when he was in opposition; he would pick on mayors who were proponents of Sunday shopping. Mel Lastman was a big proponent of Sunday shopping and Mr Rae didn't have any respect for people like him.

"I say to Mel Lastman—I know he has a long history in retail—believe me, when you have three kids and you are going through a store, it is not particularly restful to go shopping with them. It is not the most restful form of activity. I am quite honest. If I again can speak very personally, if I want to rest and spend some time with my kids, focus on them, talk to them and share jokes with them, I do not want to go to a store and have the kids come up and say, 'Let's get this, let's get that, let's do this.' It is a different attitude."

You know, that Premier still does have that option. Accordingly, he did not want to take that option away from all those people who have to work on Sundays. But upon the conversion that took place walking those six steps across the floor, every principle that he held dear is now up for grabs. Every principle that he held dear, from casino gambling to publicly funded auto insurance to Sunday shopping, is now up to the highest bidder, and that's what we have here.

Mr Mammoliti: How are you going to vote on it?

Mr Stockwell: Again, the same question comes from the member from Yorkview as he asked last time. I think he was concerned about my reading the same paragraph. You asked that question the last time, the member from Yorkview. What makes me completely different than your party is that my answer today is the

same one as it was a short period of time ago, which you probably would find kind of interesting, because you're not used to hearing consistent answers from your government.

I'm still in favour of Sunday shopping, as I voted at Metro council. I was still in favour of Sunday shopping then. But you find that really unusual, because when you talk to your members here, the Minister of Labour, who was fully opposed to Sunday shopping, is now in favour. When you talk to your cabinet ministers who sit across there, reading their notes, they were opposed to Sunday shopping a few short years ago. Now they're fully in favour. Consistency wouldn't be something you'd be used to seeing, so I understand that you've got to ask me a couple of times, because it's really unusual for you to hear a consistent message from the same political person. I move on.

1640

Mr Mammoliti: You're too negative.

Mr Stockwell: Any time you want to interject, Mr Member for Yorkview, please be my guest. We move on.

Mr Mammoliti: You're too negative and you need some help.

Mr Stockwell: Oh, I'm too negative and I need some help. There are many people out there who came to my constituency office, many people who felt that maybe your government needed a sincere amount of help: help maybe in resigning and calling an election was one option; help maybe in recall so you people would be moved out of office before this \$2-billion tax grab can take place.

I didn't suggest those people were too negative, I thought these were rational, sane people, who had just had it up to here with the flip-flops and changes in public opinion and fiscal fantasies that are taking place in this government. I will remind my constituents next time they come and see me, and those other constituents I talk to, that the member from Yorkview thinks they are too negative. I move on.

The first thing I want to say—

Mr Mammoliti: They voted you in.

Mr Stockwell: And they also voted you in, member from Yorkview.

"If we can provide convenience for people, great, let's provide convenience,"—this is the Premier, Robert K. Rae, QC, continuing—"but not at the expense of this notion, this idea of a common day of rest, of a common day of pause. That is the first thing I want to say."

The Premier goes on: "I would ask members to think about what modernity is all about, think about what it really means to be contemporary. Sometimes passing trends and fads are not really what it is all about." Sunday shopping at this time to him was simply a

passing trend or a fad. So we can expect to see the Premier coming in in bell-bottoms, no doubt, in the next couple of days. "Sometimes there are values"—

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: And a hula hoop, I might add.

"Sometimes there are values which are even more contemporary than that, such as the value of spending time with family."

Can we only think that this Premier has forgotten about the value that you have with the time you spend with your family, because on that conversion, that amazing conversion, that six-step conversion across the floor, he's forgotten about that important value.

He goes on:

"I would suggest that those of us who have been talking about this issue are going to find that more and more people are going to really think about it, think about what a modern, industrial society is going to look like. It seems to me to be a society in which we put some premium on the time that we spend away from work and some guarantees that we are going to have that kind of protection and some kind of benefit."

And this is Robert K. Rae, QC, then Leader of the Opposition. The converted Mr Rae is now in fact the Premier of Ontario.

"I think the majority of people are opposed." Here he goes on—the majority of people are opposed.

"It is a perfectly defensible position, in the sense that it is certainly respectable. I suspect it is sustained by a large number of people in the province. Several million people in the province probably say: 'Sure. I want to shop on Sunday. Let me shop.'"

"I think the majority of people are opposed. That has been my sense and continues to be my sense, but I think there certainly is a substantial number of people who are in favour of it.

"The second thing that is problematic about the local option is that it is going to produce far more widespread Sunday shopping than the majority of people in this province really want to see."

Here he is arguing against the Liberal Sunday shopping, which is a municipal option, because we would have widespread Sunday shopping. This Premier is introducing, not a municipal option; this Premier's legislation doesn't include a limited amount of Sunday shopping, this Premier's legislation is wide-open, 8-till-4, 8-till-5 Sunday shopping anywhere and everywhere in this province; and he was opposed to the Liberal legislation because it would be too wide open, it wouldn't be selective enough. I mean, God, this is unbelievable.

I go on. Again I remind the people out there, this is Robert K. Rae, QC, in opposition.

"I would argue that what we are going to find, and the

member for Sarnia"—Mr Brandt then—"has already spoken about this, is a domino effect. I will say that I think it is ludicrous to argue against that. If the region of York, north of Toronto, decides it is going to have Sunday openings in response to a certain degree of pressure, all the commercial lobby in favour of Sunday openings has to do is find one municipality in the Golden Horseshoe that is prepared to go along, one regional government that will buckle and knuckle under"—get this: "buckle and knuckle under to the pressure" of Sunday shopping advocates. "That is all it has to find—one."

Can we then assume that this Premier has now knuckled under to the pressure of Sunday shopping advocates, because in opposition that's what he was suggesting that anyone who was in favour of Sunday shopping was in fact doing. It's a matter of taking these words and then ramming them down his open mouth.

"Then what will the impact be? Every merchant in areas adjoining places that are open on Sunday will come and say: 'Look, I am being prejudiced against. My market share is being affected. I cannot do this. I cannot spend the time. I cannot do it. I am not there.'"

This is Robert K. Rae, QC, in opposition, which is completely different to Robert K. Rae, QC, Premier.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): What's the K for?

Mr Stockwell: I don't know. You'll have to ask him.

Now, this is where Robert K. Rae, QC, was in fact lecturing. He went into his lecture mode.

"I say to members opposite that I think it is ludicrous to argue that there is no such thing as a domino effect. The domino effect worked in British Columbia. The domino effect worked in Nova Scotia. It is precisely why, for example, Nova Scotia, having passed the law in one year, a year and a half later decided to repeal the law and bring in a tougher law with respect to Sunday openings, which is now in place in Nova Scotia." Nova Scotia had the intestinal fortitude to withdraw it and bring in tougher laws.

What did Mr Rae do? He just opened Sundays all up, opened them wide open. "Whatever I said before, never mind. Can't you take a joke?" That's his government policy. That's his government position. Saturday Night Live would be helpful to look into these proceedings. They could probably have a few sketches worked out on this stuff.

He goes on: "If I may say so, and I say this without wanting to be critical"—

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think it's obvious to the member from Etobicoke West that we can take a joke. We're listening to him.

The Acting Speaker: It wasn't really a point of order. The honourable member for Etobicoke West may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Stockwell: I have nothing to add, simply because I've got to continue reading if I'm going to run out of time.

Interjection: Consider the source.

Mr Stockwell: I do consider the source and, I might add, I'll only have to consider it for a couple of more years.

I move on. I say to the members—

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: Oh, and I'm glad the member from Kingston mentioned that. I guess the papers aren't writing about you not doing anything any more. Seeing as I see you standing up making statements and you're standing up forwarding all this government pap and policy, we won't be expecting any editorials in the Whig-Standard about the fact that you don't do anything.

I'll continue. "If I may say so, and I say this without wanting to be critical of another level of government"—this is Robert K. Rae, QC—"I think it is fair to say, as a matter of sociological fact, that municipal governments have been less successful in resisting the pressures of the marketplace on their political systems than other levels have been."

Can you believe he said this? This is the man who now introduces legislation for Sunday shopping. In opposition he says, "It is fair...municipal governments have been less successful in resisting the pressures of the marketplace on their political systems than other levels" of government "have been. I think this is just a fact of life."

Well, talk about a guy who's less susceptible. He folded like a cheap pup tent the minute he heard any opposition to his remarks about opposition to Sunday shopping; totally changed his mind. My goodness, he would have been better off leaving it up to the municipalities because there at least they said they'd stand up and defend the rights of those people who didn't want to shop on Sundays, something this Premier has thoroughly and totally forgotten. It's hard to believe he said it, but when you know Mr Robert K. Rae, QC, it's not surprising.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The government must be sufficiently embarrassed about its change in position that there isn't a quorum in the House.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have a quorum?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1650

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum now is present. The honourable member for Etobicoke West may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Stockwell: You know, it is frustrating. This is the government that doesn't want to debate the budget the people want to hear debate about, and then it picks the subject it wants to debate, which is Sunday shopping, and it can't even keep a quorum. Then when a member stands up to question whether there's a quorum in this place, he gets dressed down by the member for Downsview suggesting his political career is reduced to calling quorum, from the member who has nothing better to do in question period than ask about Blue Jays signs in the entrance to Toronto.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member for Durham West on a point of—

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Order, Mr Speaker. According to the standing orders, this debate should be taking place around the common pause day. The fact that there are only two Tories and one Liberal in this place is one of the reasons that—

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member knows well that's not a point of order.

Mr Stockwell: This member from Durham, who's famous for garbage dumps, can't even understand that the responsibility for keeping quorum is with his government. I mean, let's just give up. We've told them that 25 times. They just clearly do not want to know. I move on.

Mr Klopp: It's 20 members, period.

Mr Stockwell: Just read it, Mr Klopp, if that's a possibility. Just read it and it'll be very clear: 20 members of the government. Go ask your House leader whether or not those are the rules, whether that's what the standing traditions have been.

I move on. This is Mr Robert K. Rae, QC, again about Sunday shopping: "If we are going to stop the flow, the best and most effective way to do it is for this House to determine how much activity of a commercial kind do we want on a Sunday and to say that, as a group in this province, these are the rules of the game and these are the rules we are expected to live up to."

He decided that. We as a province can decide how much activity. Mr Rae decided that. I'm not sure he was really thinking about open, full-blown Sunday shopping when he said this but he's decided how much activity: all the activity we can muster. Everybody can open. Everybody can be forced to work. Nobody has to take a day off. You owe it all to the boss. You've got to go in to work. Everything he stood for is chopped liver.

The question is, how do I feel about it? When I was campaigning on this issue, unlike the members opposite, I told people that I was in favour of Sunday shopping and I'm quite certain others on this side of the House told people they were in favour of Sunday shopping. I think we lost some votes because we told people the

truth. You see, that's where I stood on this issue.

The difference between where I stood and the people on this side of the House was that we told them the truth and it cost us votes. What you did was not tell them where your position was on this issue, and it didn't cost you any votes until you got to this Legislature, comfortably in power, and then you told people the truth. The truth is that you had no plank on Sunday shopping; you had no position. It was as movable as the sand on the beach. So I think that's the difference and that's why I'm coming about on this issue, because when we campaigned we told them where we stood. You did not tell them where you stood. You were hardly forthright and less than honest, in my opinion.

Moving on: Here he goes on, "That argument, if I may say so, is just about the stupidest argument I think I've heard from the lips of the Attorney General." Now, he said the Attorney General's arguments are stupid surrounding Sunday shopping. "I ask members to think about it for a moment. First of all, the government says: 'We are going to allow all municipalities to pass their own rules, and they can pass whatever rules they like. If Metropolitan Toronto wants to say that stores on the east side of the street can be open but stores on the west side cannot be open, it can do that. If they want to say that stores of a certain size can be open but other stores cannot be open, or if they want to say that certain stores can be open on every other Sunday but other stores have to be open on the other Sunday, they can say that. We have given the power to the municipalities to do whatever they like.'"

He was opposed to Sunday shopping. He'd be better off to give the municipalities the power. You'd hold truer to your form, you'd hold truer to your NDP philosophies, you'd hold truer to your party policies if you gave anyone else this decision except yourselves, because your position is totally opposite to what you said your position was. And you're chastising another government. You're chastising municipalities not having the ability to withstand public pressure. You people folded under public pressure and caved on one of the major principles you campaigned on last election: a common pause day.

Mr Perruzza: Do I sense a note of anger?

Mr Stockwell: There's more than anger. The member says, is there anger? Yes, there's anger. There's anger because you had the nerve to go out there and tell them you were opposed. You had the nerve to go around this province collecting all those votes that went with it. You had the nerve to take the moral high ground and suggest to the people in this province that you were the only ones who had the noble thoughts and the correct practices in place to protect them. Yes, that makes me angry, I say to the member for Downsview. Yes, that makes me angry, because it's pious, it's immoral and it's dishonest. Yes. And that not only makes me angry; it

makes the people of this province angry.

"Then the Attorney General says: 'And this makes the law more enforceable.' Members should think about that thought for a moment, sustain it in their heads for a second, and at the same time think of the realities of those store owners who want to stay open regardless." He goes on: "Let me suggest that Mr Magder, whose name is well known to members of the House, who is an individual who has challenged the law consistently, is not going to be satisfied with any law in Metropolitan Toronto that does not give him exactly what he wants." Well, he didn't have to worry about Metropolitan Toronto; you gave him exactly what he wanted. "Mr Magder believes he has a right to open on Sundays, that it is his commercial right, and he intends to exercise that, come hell or high water. He has made that very clear.

"I might add that this law, in its entire stupidity, also allows municipalities to set the level of the fine for stores that are going to be deciding whether or not to comply with this legislation."

Don't worry about the laws any more, Mr Speaker. Under their legislation, anybody can open any time, 8 till 4, 9 till 5, on a Sunday.

He goes on: "I say to the Solicitor General that one of the results of the committee inquiry, which my colleague from Etobicoke was so active on, was simply to say: 'Then let's make the fines real, and if the fines are real, let's enforce those fines.' Let's remind ourselves, after all, why we are scuttling around embarrassed about a law which the Supreme Court of Canada in a very recent decision has said is constitutional, OK and in keeping with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and entirely within the jurisdiction of provincial government to legislate."

He wasn't even bound to open under legislation. He himself said so during the second reading of this debate with the Liberals.

Now you get into the real borderline hilarious stuff from Robert K. Rae, QC. First off, and this is the best of all—

Mr Perruzza: What's the K for?

Mr Stockwell: I still don't know.

First off, he says, to start this paragraph, "I am a realist." Now, can you get that? This is from a guy who's opposed to Sunday shopping because he doesn't believe it will add to the province of Ontario family. He thinks it will cut away at the fabric and the democratic right of people to choose, so he starts one of his paragraphs with, "I am a realist." He may be a lot of things, but the last thing anyone would call him at this time would be a realist.

"I am a realist. We know that when a Premier has in a sense said, 'This is it, this is my position, I don't want to be humiliated or embarrassed by having to change my

mind," all I can say is that I hope the government listens to what is being told by the community." Robert K. Rae, QC, said this as leader of the opposition party.

The guy's changed his mind more often than his socks and he has the nerve to suggest he doesn't want to be humiliated or embarrassed, the Premier, about changing his mind.

I go on. The part-time Minister of Environment's here. I'm glad to see him.

The third reading came into effect some time later and Mr Rae got up and, not wanting to just satisfy himself with these particular thoughts on the public agenda, he offered us even more concrete examples of exactly how far he strayed from his socialist doctrine. He moves on. His third reading was even more embarrassing than the second reading. He even went further in some of these comments, which really is unbelievable.

Interjections.

Mr Stockwell: Why I'm reading this is because I think it's important for the people of this province to realize—

1700

Mr Wiseman: Reading it because you can't make it up.

Mr Stockwell: I couldn't make this up. You're absolutely right. I say to the member opposite from Durham, I couldn't even begin to make this stuff up. Only Robert K. Rae, QC, could possibly make up this kind of stuff and then have the nerve to stand here as Premier and say: "Everything I told you in opposition with respect to Sunday shopping was just not true. Everything I said in opposition about family, about the right to choose between working and not working, about not having to take orders from the boss one day a week, everything I said was simply not the case, because now, in government, I've thoroughly and completely changed my mind."

I move on. Mr Rae, on third reading, starts out: "The Progressive Conservatives are prepared to stand up and be counted to say we must change the law to greatly expand Sunday shopping in response to demand." Well, here he is chastising my party, which was the third party at the time, because they're going to stand up and say we must change the law for Sunday shopping and make it more open and more widespread. He's chastising us.

"That was the position of the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party back in 1986." He's chiding us.

"I think it fair to say, in the interests of historical accuracy, that as soon as he made this speech and this statement to the press, he was mugged by his colleagues. In fact, they required him to set up a special task force under the leadership of Terry O'Connor, which task force sat and recommended that the common pause day be retained and that there be some changes in the law." The law? To expand Sunday shopping.

He moves on. "Liberals signed that report," and now he's chastising the government for signing a report about the common pause day. Mr Robert K. Rae, QC, goes on, "Liberals signed that report, the same Liberals we see face to face now." You see, he's looking across at the Liberals, who had changed their mind, and he's looking across at them, starting to jab. He's going on: "...Liberals we see face to face, the same ones we see in the corridors, the same people. Some of them have different titles." You see, he's chiding them because now that they're in government, now they have ministerial titles, they've changed their mind. He thinks this is awful. He as opposition leader thinks this is just reprehensible. He doesn't know how people can move from this side of the House to that side of the House and change their thinking.

Holy smokes, this is Robert K. Rae, QC, Mr Flip-Flop, chiding anybody for changing their mind. He goes on: "But they are all the same folks and their signatures are remarkably similar to the signatures that they had when they signed this report.

"They were in favour of a common pause day before the election in 1987. They said they agreed with the approach to a common pause day in 1987. I'm not talking about 1787 or 1887. I am talking about a Liberal Party that is totally different from the one we see before us. I am talking about people who are still members of this House."

You know, this is unbelievable. This man has the nerve to stand up and pass legislation after saying this in this Legislature, after saying this about the previous administration? Unbelievable.

"The Premier said that a common pause day was the platform upon which he wanted to be elected by the people of Ontario. It was not a big issue for him. He wanted to make that clear. It was not a priority for the government, one way or the other. He wanted to make that clear. But it was still one which he accepted and which he thought was a fair compromise."

Well, this wasn't a big deal for Mr Peterson, and he got chastised by Mr Rae. This was a big deal for you, you and your common pause day and your association with the unions and so on, that insisted a common pause day be kept. Your leader in opposition was chastising the then Liberal government for changing its mind on the common pause day. My, how quickly the tables have turned. My, how incredibly Robert K. Rae, QC, can forget where he stood on something as important as a common pause day to the people of Ontario.

This is Robert K. Rae, QC, continuing: "Let me say that if the principle of a common day of rest was good enough to get the Premier elected in 1987, it ought to be good enough for the Premier and the Liberal government in 1989. That is the principle, the word that has been broken, the commitment that has been shattered." Robert K. Rae, QC, to the Liberal government in 1989.

This is what he said in opposition. This is what he said about the Liberal government changing its mind on Sunday shopping. I'll read that again for effect alone. "Let me say," speaking to Mr Peterson—

Mr Wiseman: You are alone. Nobody's listening to you.

Mr Stockwell: No, I think there are people listening to me, all kinds of people out there in the province of Ontario, all kinds of people who want to listen to me and all the members opposite on the budget's \$2-billion tax grab, all kinds of people in this province who want to hear from us about the flip-flops, the changes in position, the total attitudinal change from this government with respect to policies.

I'm not really sure how you as a member of the New Democratic Party can sit in this Legislature to this day after the flip-flops and changes that your government has taken on any practical principle that you stood for. Nothing at any concrete level of party principle has been maintained and stayed, and you are the people who pretended to protect the high road and the small person. You, my friend, should be ashamed of yourself. I move on.

Mr Rae said, "Let me say that if the principle of a common day of rest was good enough to get the Premier elected in 1987"—you know what, I can just substitute Bob Rae's words; I can just substitute the dates. You see, I'll just change the dates here, "Let me say that if the principle of a common day of rest was good enough to get the Premier elected in 1990, it ought to be good enough for the Premier and the NDP government in 1993." This is the principle, the word that is being broken, the commitment that has been shattered. Those are Bob Rae's words. All I did was change the dates. That's what a horrific, horrendous policy reversal this government has made on one of its planks: common pause day. Now they're creating a pay pause day. Maybe they should have them on Sundays. Maybe that's one way of keeping both promises.

Mr Mills: How much more of this punishment?

Mr Stockwell: About 25 minutes and 26 seconds. I don't know why the members opposite consider this punishment. I think you would be very interested in hearing what your Premier had to say about Sunday shopping in opposition.

Mr Mammoliti: Yes, but you're dwelling on it.

Mr Stockwell: Of course I'm dwelling on it. The member from Yorkview suggests that I and the member opposite are dwelling on what the Premier said in opposition with respect to Sunday shopping. Of course I'm dwelling on it. Of course I'm reading it. This is a speech, verbatim from the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Robert K. Rae, QC, in opposition. Of course I'm dwelling on it. Can't you see the complete lack of integrity, the complete change in moral values, the complete

sellout to the corporate hierarchies in this province that has taken place? I think you, of all people, should be very interested in and keen on hearing exactly what your leader said in opposition. My goodness, you'd think they'd want to get a little bit of knowledge of exactly how far they've strayed from party policy. Now you know why the rank and file in your party are upset. Now you know why the unions aren't going to have checkoffs any more. Now you know why you're at 8% in the popular vote. This is why. This is exactly why, because you said these things over here. You had the nerve to stand up and condemn governments, and you're worse. You're doing exactly the same thing with all these contemptible words in opposition.

Mr Mammoliti: But how are you voting?

Mr Stockwell: The member from Yorkview, having a memory problem, asked me how I'm voting again and I'll tell him I'm still in favour. And again the consistency thing is probably giving you a really hard time, you see, because in 1985 I was in favour and then in 1990 when the election was held I was in favour, and of course today I'm still in favour. That's probably a problem you have. You're not used to people being in favour of something for longer periods of time than half an hour. I move on.

Mr Perruzza: Wait till you cross the floor.

Mr Stockwell: Wait till I cross the floor. Well, on that day in 1995 when I cross the floor and sit on that side of the House, I still think I'll be in favour of Sunday shopping.

Interjections.

Mr Stockwell: I hope that was gotten on Hansard.

Mr Rae went on, and this is really good. He said, "It would be democratic and exciting"—you see, he thought this would be democratic and exciting—"to perhaps give members a chance to express themselves." Well, here's a guy who isn't allowing debate on his budget. He thought that would be democratic and exciting. Well, today he doesn't think it's democratic and exciting. He's not giving us an opportunity to express our views on the budget, but back then this excited the man to hear people's views. Today he doesn't seem too excited about hearing our views on the budget, two days of debate.

1710

He goes on: "What is the principle behind these two bills, two very simple pieces of legislation which we are now being asked to deal with? In December 1987, I can remember the Solicitor General, the Attorney General and the Minister of Labour got up and delivered themselves of their package, saying what they were in favour of.

"My favourite comment by the Attorney General was that the major reason they had to introduce this legislation was because the old legislation was unenforceable. This is legislation that was upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1986. The case was not argued by the

Attorney General that time, which may be why we won it. I would rather have had my affairs handled by Hamilton Burger than by the Attorney General, but that is another matter."

"What he said was, 'What this new law says is this: There is going to be a local option and I want you to listen to the various ways in which the municipalities are going to be able, according to this legislation, to deal with the question of Sunday shopping.'

"The member for Norfolk, who just spoke, said we should not even call it Sunday shopping; we should simply refer to it as the Retail Business Holidays Act and that to call it Sunday shopping in fact is a misnomer. This whole thing is called Sunday shopping by the Ministry of the Solicitor General, so that is what I am describing it as.

"I want you to listen to this wording, Mr Speaker, because you are a lawyer and you know how important the wording of the act is.

"A bylaw or regulation under this section,

"(a) may apply to any part or parts of the municipality or territory.'

"Oh," he goes on, "that is great. So you are going to select one part of the street and not another part of the street? That will be easy for municipalities to decide, that will be a cinch."

Well, he went even further. He decided not just a municipality, not just a region, not just one side of the street or the other side; everybody gets opened in Bob Rae's Ontario. Everybody gets to work on Sundays. "What I said when I was in opposition, never mind, I didn't mean it. I was only an irresponsible leader of the official opposition. I didn't really think that I would actually have to implement these policies," because if he did how could he have possibly said this kind of stuff.

He goes on:

"Second, we heard from the member for Halton Centre who said that the only people who would be working on Sunday would be volunteers. My party and I have often been described by members opposite, by members of the other party, and indeed by many people as people who do not have a great deal of knowledge of how the world of business works." Well, that hasn't changed.

"Mr Speaker, I want to ask you to form a mental picture in your head, if you would, and hold it there for a moment"—here's Bob Rae talking about why it is impossible to have Sunday shopping in Ontario—"of a small retail establishment that is in a mall. The mall is opening on a Sunday. The small retail firm selling shoes, whatever it may be, has two or three employees. Does anybody seriously think that there are going to be employees lining up, volunteering and saying, 'Please, choose me to work on Sunday and choose me to work the next Sunday and the next Sunday'? What do you

think the response is going to be from the employer who says, 'I have to come in on Sunday, so therefore you come in on Sunday' when some person says: 'No, I don't want to come in. I do not think that is reasonable'?"

When Robert K. Rae, QC, was Leader of the Opposition, what he was saying in this paragraph was, it is impossible, absolutely impossible, to write legislation that would allow people to opt out of working on Sunday. Now, as leader of the NDP government, where his policies have changed and he's allowing wide-open Sunday shopping, now this same man who in opposition said it's impossible to write legislation that would protect people suddenly decides he can write legislation that will protect people. Unbelievable, absolutely unbelievable.

"The minister talked for a long time about he was going to grant us the right to refuse, but what has he done?" What has Premier Rae done? "He has not given us the right to refuse. He has loaded it and corralled it with so many exemptions and so much work for lawyers, that the people who are going to be working harder on Sunday than anybody else as a result of this are lawyers and arbitrators who are going to have a field day with this legislation. They have to go through it all—the history of the work relationship, whether the employer has or has not made reasonable efforts, the existence of an emergency situation and all the rest of it."

This from a man who's protecting nobody on Sunday from working—nobody; everybody has to work—and he complained about legislation that was trying to protect people. This is how far you've strayed, totally strayed off base.

Robert K. Rae, QC, continues, as Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Perruzza: Hey, what's the K for?

Mr Stockwell: I still don't know what the K is for, and the member from Downsview is finding this a very interesting thing. Why don't you just walk down to the corner office and ask somebody?

Mr Perruzza: Okay. What's the Q and C for?

Mr Stockwell: QC is Queen's Counsel.

Mr Perruzza: Oh, you know that?

Mr Stockwell: I'm glad you asked that question. Any more tough ones, please don't hesitate.

"I want to remind members of what this government said when it took Paul Magder to court. Do you know that this government said? It said the reason that this law is constitutional and not simply a law to enforce the religious Sabbath of one religion or another, is because it is essentially designed as labour legislation to protect working people. I'm here to say that the best way to protect the working people in the retail trade is to keep stores shut and to make sure they do not have to work. That is the best labour legislation you could have."

Mr Rae said the best labour legislation any government can introduce as a government in the province of Ontario is to keep the stores shut and therefore people won't have to work. What is one of the quickest acts? They're opening the stores. Under this government, more stores are open, more hours are worked without any labour legislation to protect any of those people from working that Mr Rae was so concerned about.

You almost get the impression that this member from York South, this leader of the opposition party, was simply saying things to get elected. After reading the Agenda for People, you're almost certain that he holds nothing true. He holds no party policies true. He holds no party discipline, no plank, no platform in this party close to his heart. It's all designed to get him elected.

"For the first time in recent years, a Minister of Labour has introduced changes which in fact are going to take away from the rights of working people and not add to them.

"I want to say to the members of the Liberal Party, because I know we are approaching the time when they are going to be making up their minds on a free vote, that they have been given a lot of bunk information from their own minister. For example, in the literature she handed out, there is a question-and-answer section:

"Question: Are there any benefits to Sunday shopping?

"Answer: Yes, experience in other jurisdictions.

"Then they have the myth that allowing Sunday openings will just spread six days of consumer spending over seven days. Not true. What is the basis for this? A recent study by Clayton Research Associates of Toronto entitled *The Impact of Sunday Shopping in Alberta, 1982-1986*. My staff phoned the Ministry of the Solicitor General and said: 'Have you got this study?' They said, 'No, we don't have it, but Clayton has it.' We phoned Clayton and say, 'Clayton, have you got this study?' Clayton says, 'There is no such study.' It does not exist. It is not there, so the foundation on which this legislation was put forward is false and untrue."

We have the Premier suggesting there's no study that says opening Sundays is going to allow any more shopping, is going to generate any more revenue. That's what his position was. He just said in this speech, "Opening on Sunday isn't going to generate any more spending." But that's one of the reasons why this Premier introduced legislation to have the common pause day revoked.

I think the members opposite should hear this one, it's a very interesting paragraph: Robert K. Rae, QC, leader of the opposition party on the Liberal motion for Sunday shopping. He says:

"I want to come back to a basic point and that is this: When we all go back to our constituencies, as we do, we will all have a sense that there is a common value that

all of us share in being together as much as possible with our families.

"I want to read to members just one letter that was written by a schoolgirl in Etobicoke. Katherine Silveira writes"—he's reading a letter now, Mr Robert K. Rae, that he received on Sunday shopping:

"I think that shopping on Sunday will destroy our families because moms, dads, brothers and sisters will be forced to work and be away from home. My mother works at Eaton's Sherway. She already has to work one night a week and if she works on Sunday, we won't be able to get to mass, eat dinner together or do girl things that ladies do. Please vote no for Sunday shopping."

Robert K. Rae, QC, read this into the record, the man who is in fact the proponent, the leader, of Sunday shopping in Ontario.

"I think that Sunday has taken on a meaning and a value that really transcends any of our common religions"—this is Robert K. Rae again—"and that value is the fact that it is a common day in which as many of us as possible can be at home. It is a day when we do not have to obey the boss. It is a day when we do not have to do as we are told by employers. It is a day when we can be with our families. It is a day when we do not have to worry about commercialism. It is a day when we do not have to shop. It is a day when we can simply be together and not be driven by: 'Buy, buy, buy. Shop, shop, shop.' It is a day when we can in fact take some time. We can have lunch that can last for a couple of hours. We can go for an afternoon in the park and spend all that time together.

"Some will say, 'None of that will change.' I want to say to the members that some of it might change. In fact, I think if we follow the logic of this legislation, some of that will change.

1720

"On balance, I want to say that if we have to cast a vote one way or the other in favour of more time with families on Sundays or less time with families on Sundays—I do not regard it as meaning, as the Minister of Labour has said on many occasions, 'This doesn't mean the end of family.' Of course it does not mean the end of family. That is not the issue."

Robert K. Rae went on to say: "The issue is whether we are strengthening the family. The issue is whether we are strengthening time off. The issue is whether, on balance, we are doing a little more for working people or a little less for working people, whether we are doing a little more for commercialism or a little less for commercialism. That is really what we are left with.

"I say to those members who are no doubt whipped into shape now and eager and prepared to vote and to do nothing but vote on this particular issue, I think they are making the wrong decision." Robert K. Rae in opposition: "I think they are making the wrong decision. We

have fought this battle hard and we have fought it long for one simple reason: We think the legislation is bad. While we never felt we were in a position numerically to defeat the legislation, we did feel we were strong enough and in good enough shape that we could in fact hold it up long enough to give the opposition a chance to form.

"That is why I say to you, Mr Speaker, that because the government has dropped the ball and given it to the local level of government, because it decided to avoid its responsibilities, because it has broken its election promises...I say to the member for Ottawa West who has been interrupting me, because of that simple fact, this battle is not at all over. This battle in fact has just begun. It will be fought on the streets; it will be fought in terms of relations among businesses, consumers, working people and business establishments that want to open and other small businesses that do not."

He finally sums up: "In that fight, this Liberal government is causing far more trouble than this issue deserves, or far more trouble than municipal councils or workers want. It is putting incredible pressure on people to do things they do not want to do. I say to the minister, it is my feeling and my understanding that the willingness to fight is there, and the fight has just begun."

So, Mr Speaker, Sunday shopping has now reached what is an incredibly ironic situation, absolutely, breathtakingly, astoundingly ironic. Here we have two speeches delivered, two very partisan, personal—talking about his Sundays and his constituents' Sundays, and the right that no one has to answer to the boss seven days a week. Two very partisan and, I might add, probably very good speeches in opposition to Sunday shopping, and we have this Premier who made these speeches in opposition, telling the people in the province of Ontario that: "What I told you in the election of 1990, what I told you in the election of 1987, what I told you in the election of 1985 and 1981, I really didn't mean. I didn't mean it because I wasn't in power."

So if we in opposition tend to get a little angry about some of these issues like casino gambling and Sunday shopping and government-run auto insurance—and the list is endless—and integrity in caucus, in cabinet and conflicts of interest, you can understand why, because we in opposition were subjected to this kind of blather from the then Leader of the Opposition about the moral high ground he had staked out for himself and his party when it came to issues that affected the small people, the small businesses and the unemployed of this province. When it came to talking about people and lottery systems, about a tax on the poor, the same Premier's the one introducing casino gambling.

You can really understand why, as opposition members, we have a little bit of angst and a little bit of anger in our speeches, because we had to sit through, at municipal or provincial levels, and listen to this kind of

socialist pap that had about this much meaning.

We come today—and I would have much rather been debating the budget today, because we come to today and we are told by the Premier, and the House leader, that this assembly, this Legislature, will not be given the same opportunity to debate the budget that he was afforded as Leader of the Opposition, the same opportunity to make the speeches that he made like this, the same opportunity to debate, condemn, if necessary, applaud the government on financial and revenue measures, the same opportunity he was given on 13 days worth of hearings in 1988, the same opportunity this leader was given to make a complete ass of himself with respect to Sunday shopping and his position in opposition and his position in government.

We, as the third party, find the government's motives and changes reprehensible. But the least consideration that can be given us, as a third-party opposition, and you, as Speaker, to the minority viewpoint, is an opportunity to debate these important issues, like a \$2-billion tax grab, in a public forum that allows us to go on the record and explain why we are so opposed to him and this government.

Not only has this government flip-flopped, changed and redesigned all its policies, it forgot one of the most important things of where it stood in opposition. They stood to protect the minority viewpoint. They stood for the democratic right to be heard. The most important attack that we in opposition sense and feel from this government is the attack on our ability to be heard on issues of the day that are important.

They changed the rules that don't allow us to speak at length. They've changed the rules to close down debate. They moved closure in some sessions more often than governments did in entire terms. They closed down debate on the budget after two days. They closed down debate last year on a budget after two days. They do this in almost a mocking gesture. They do this as once the protectors of the underdog, as once the protectors of the minority, as the ones who once said lotteries are a tax on the poor, ones who once said Sunday shopping is oppressing the working people and the working people don't deserve to go in and work on Sundays, the ones who said you couldn't introduce legislation to protect people from working on Sundays.

In conclusion, if there's some degree of anger, I think it comes, by at least myself and maybe this caucus, honestly, because the position that you enunciated in your 1990 election campaign and the position that you put down on paper have totally reversed and changed. Anything that you stood for has so dramatically changed, it leaves me with a sense that you didn't mean any of it. All you were trying to do was get elected, and now that you're elected, you're messing up so badly, practically the vast majority of people in this province—not practically: The vast majority of people in this province

wished we had a right of recall, wished we had a right to recall every one of you, because they think you're messing things up far worse than they could have been.

This Sunday shopping issue is not on the front burner. It's not the big issue it was some five, six, seven, eight years ago. But it's very indicative and tells a very truthful story about exactly where the principles of this government are and where the principles of this government will be in the future.

I say to all the constituents out there, next time they vote in a provincial election, be very clear about how and what this government is going to say about how and what it will do in government, because what it says on the campaign trail and what it does in the Legislature, according to Bob Rae and Sunday shopping, are two very completely, distinctly different things.

Mr Mills: I've listened to the member for Etobicoke West partly today and before, I believe for 90 minutes almost. I would just like to tell him that I think he's missed his calling. I think he should be in musicals, because the comments that he's made here today have absolutely no relation to 1993.

1730

This Sunday shopping is not an issue in the social agenda any more. People want this government to talk about jobs and about the economy. People have already said, 72% of them in the last Gallup poll, that they want Sunday shopping. This government has taken great steps to protect the working people who work in the stores; they're protected. The government has taken steps to protect the store owners in the malls who, by their lease agreements, are no longer forced to remain open.

I can remember going around the province on the committee for Bill 115, and every night I was badgered by the member for Oakville South, the Conservative, who said to me: "Gord, for goodness' sake, talk some sense. We need this Sunday shopping open." There wasn't a night went by that I wasn't badgered by the member for York Centre, Mr Sorbara. He said, "Why don't you talk some sense into your people?"

We have proven that we listen to the people. The people have spoken that they want to shop on Sunday. I think it behooves a responsible government to listen to the people, to act upon what they've said, and this is what we've done. We have decided that the people of the province of Ontario want to shop on Sunday.

I listened to that nonsense the member for Etobicoke went on and on about—"Mr Rae, QC"—and really it has no point.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member for St George-St David.

Mr Murphy: I'm pleased to be able to follow the fine comments from the member of Etobicoke West. I think his contribution is very valuable and I'm sure, after the 1995 election, when we're in government, we'd be

pleased to consult with him as Leader of the Opposition.

But let me say that I look forward to participating in this debate in a more fulsome way. I will be voting for it. I think it's a good thing that we have free votes in this House from time to time, although I think there are some particular aspects of how that free vote is going to operate in the circumstance that concerns me, which is particularly the fact that the law is not being enforced as it stands on the books because of the direction of the Solicitor General to the law-enforcement officials in communities all across the province.

Let me say too, though, that I agree with the member from Etobicoke West and I'm concerned that this is the bill we're dealing with today. I think the province wants to hear debate and discussion about concerns related to issues like the budget and other bills that are more important to the people. They want to hear what we and the members of the government and members of the third party have to say about those issues. I think frankly, by and large, the public thinks that the Sunday shopping bill has already been passed, to be honest with you.

I think it's unfortunate that this bill was not dealt with last June or last session. I think it's, frankly, a bit of a reflection on the inability of the government to manage its legislative timetable that we are now, a year after its introduction, within a few days, only now debating it in second reading. I look forward to developing those themes further when I get a chance to speak.

The Speaker: The member for Yorkview.

Mr Mammoliti: I want to respond to the member for Etobicoke West in saying that, first of all, I'm opposed to the bill and I'll be voting opposed to this. But I can't understand why, for an hour and a half, he did nothing but criticize the Premier. He didn't give us any real arguments towards this. He didn't spend a few minutes to talk about why he's in favour of it and how he's going to vote in favour of this. So while he's going to vote in favour of this, he did nothing but criticize the Premier for an hour and a half in this place. To me, that's not constructive.

He didn't mention that the Premier has opened up the vote in this place. I can tell you that if I respect any Premier, I respect the Premier who understands an issue that is so important that he would open it up to a free vote.

Mr Stockwell: It was a free vote with the Liberals.

Mr Mammoliti: It doesn't matter. I would still respect any Premier for doing that.

The member for Etobicoke West, I think, had nothing else to do tonight, had nothing else to do for the half-hour that he spoke a few weeks ago on this issue, and proved that tonight by doing nothing but criticizing.

I will be voting opposed to this because I firmly believe, as I believed three years ago and as I believed

four and five years go, that Sunday shopping does not help the economy and does nothing but ruin families. Proof of that—and I hope to debate this in the future—will be some examples that I'll be using perhaps in my riding of families who have been ruined because of the Sunday shopping.

The Speaker: The member for Sarnia.

Mr Huget: I'm pleased to offer my comments on the remarks from the member from Etobicoke West, a member, by the way, whom I consider to be a very bright fellow. I'm somewhat disappointed—in fact I find it rather tragic—that a speech of that duration would be reduced to simply talking about old Hansard and discussions of years ago.

The unfortunate thing is that I didn't hear any debate, much like the member from St George-St David, who I believe is also concerned about a relevant debate on this issue. I didn't hear any of the issues debated. I didn't hear anything about the impact on retail and the retail economy in this province. I didn't hear anything about the impact, positive or negative, about the entire retail sector, including employers and employees. I heard nothing about the protection afforded to retail workers in the province. I heard nothing about the protection afforded to small retailers who have the ability now for the first time to not comply with leases that would force them to open on Sunday. I heard none of those issues addressed.

While I find, I guess, journeys into history interesting, to a point, I have to question the relevance in today's debate. I'm looking forward to seeing some debate by the participants in this House about the issues and about those issues as they affect people today in this province. They are serious issues. There are large questions and I think still a large section of disagreement in the province of whether or not this is the way the province should be going or its people should be going or its economic activity should be going.

I would have liked to have heard some of the comments of perhaps his constituents in Etobicoke West and Mr Chiarelli's constituents, the speaker before him from the opposition party in Ottawa West. I would have liked to have heard some of those comments, some of those remarks, some of those problems, some of those issues addressed. All I heard from Mr Chiarelli and from Mr Stockwell were mean-spirited attacks on history.

The Speaker: The member for Etobicoke West has up to two minutes to respond.

Mr Stockwell: Well, mean-spirited attacks on history? I don't know how just reading Hansard can be a mean-spirited attack on history. These words were said by Robert K. Rae, QC. The person who said them must have been mean-spirited at the time, if you confused them that way.

I move on. The issues, yes, were addressed. I guess

they just weren't listening. The talk about protection—the Leader of the Opposition of the day and Premier at the time said that it was impossible to protect people against Sunday shopping. The member for Sarnia simply wasn't listening or doesn't care to hear, much like right now. It was impossible to protect people if they're going to be forced to work. It was addressed in there. They were going to be forced to work.

The difficulty is, this mean-spirited attack on history, this was the verbiage used by Mr Rae in opposition. Maybe the point to be made here is, you don't like hearing it, not that you didn't hear anything of interest. You just don't like hearing it.

I move on. The member from Durham suggests that 72% are in favour of Sunday shopping. Well, I understood this party, when it was in opposition, didn't read polls. Your party platform policies weren't based on polls. Now, when you get into government, your policy platforms, your policies by your rank and file, are all based on polls. My, how times have changed. You didn't read polls before. You didn't measure polls on party policy.

Maybe you didn't like hearing this stuff. I understand that. But it's my job to remind you of what you said, and I can understand that if I had taken a complete, an absolute about-face, looked absolutely ridiculous about reading this speech into the record, I'd be embarrassed too. I understand why you're embarrassed. But to make a mean-spirited attack on history? It's not revision. It's not changing history. I just read it. I would be as embarrassed as you are if someone could read this about my party.

1740

The Speaker: I recognize in rotation the member for Downsview.

Mr Perruzza: It's indeed a pleasure to be able to participate in this debate. I'd like to say at the outset that I'm not going to be supporting the Sunday shopping legislation, in fact I'm going to be voting against it, and I'm going to outline some of the reasons why I'm going to be voting against it in just a few moments.

But following the member from Etobicoke, I can't help but note how he refuses to recognize some of the realities that I think you have to deal with, you know. You make the transition from opposition to government, you make the transition, I guess, from private life to government and you have to govern for all of the people and all of the province.

I think that we as individuals can afford the luxury to bring to this place private opinions and opinions that are far more reflective of our own individual constituencies, but I think that our executive, the Premier and the executive council of this province, the cabinet, have to be far more reflective of the entire population, so sometimes the decisions that they undertake as executive

members, as governors, as premiers, as cabinet ministers, are not consistent with the perhaps prior opinions that they voiced.

The member from Etobicoke is a Conservative member of this Legislature, and I can tell you that as I listened in 1984, before Mulroney got elected federally, he talked about no GST, he talked about no free trade, but when he became Prime Minister—I guess the member for Etobicoke would have us believe that somehow Conservatives are the only ones that are true to their commitments and true to their words. Well, I can tell him, if he's missed some of the headlines in the media and on television and so on, he'll note that in fact Mulroney went from a no free trade position to a North American free trade position, from a no GST position to a "Tax everybody right across the board," irrespective of how much you make and what you can afford to pay.

But having said that, I'm going to voice my own very individualized view and a view that I believe is reflective certainly of a good chunk of the population in my particular riding.

I guess when you talk about Sunday shopping you can make a number of arguments, and we've all essentially heard them. We've debated the issues in our own kitchens and in our own living rooms with our own families and some of us have debated them with extended families and some of us have had the luxury to be able to debate the issue in the broader public as a whole, and we all know the arguments.

There are arguments that can be made that reflect the fairness for families, and there certainly is a fundamental family issue that can be made with respect to Sunday shopping. We can all make the money arguments, and I guess I'm no different, and I'll attempt to try to reflect some of that as well here this afternoon. We've all heard the issue of public opinion and the argument of public opinion and the issue of civil disobedience, that if the public overwhelmingly is moving in a certain direction and if they are in some way refusing to obey the laws as set out, then to some degree it's incumbent upon public institutions and certainly governments to move with the public and obviously to reflect the public.

But I don't think I could talk about Sunday shopping here this afternoon if I didn't talk about my own personal experience with this particular issue. I remember, as a young boy growing up—and I come from an immigrant family; my family immigrated to this province and to this country when I was nine years old. I guess, as most immigrant families and as most working-class families, there are certain luxuries that you can't afford, but you do come to appreciate and you do come to respect those times when you're able to come together, because there is a bonding that takes place during those specific events. I can remember in my own family that Sunday certainly was one of those days. In fact, quite frankly, for us it was the only day.

I don't ever recall my parents being able to afford for the four of us—I have a sister and two younger brothers—the ability to take us on a Florida holiday for a week or two weeks to spend together. I don't ever recall a time where we could scoot on up to the Muskokas, where we could spend a weekend in a retreat setting so that we could come together as a group in the way that we have come together. What we could afford to do was that on Sundays we would essentially, all of us, be at home. My father was a construction worker, a carpenter. He worked five days a week—six days a week, Saturdays as well. My mother worked in many different places and she worked very much in the home as well.

So my own personal experience—and I talk about my experience because I think that my experience is very representative of most working families, both in the province of Ontario and in the rest of Canada itself. There are many families that can't afford time off as a group to be able to come together as a family and to be able to celebrate in many of the things that families are able to do.

I bring my own experience to my decision-making, and I fundamentally believe that my own experience is fairly indicative of the experience of many families and of many of the families in my own riding of Downsview. As a result of that, I am not going to be supporting this particular legislation, because I don't believe for one minute that you can, with any legislation, protect people from being forced to work. This is an issue that will affect primarily and predominantly the working poor and families that won't be able to afford retreats and times on their own.

I have so much more to be able to say on this particular subject, but I understand and I have been slipped a note here which suggests that the Lieutenant Governor is waiting to give assent to bills and he is waiting to come into this House. So what I'm going to do is simply adjourn the debate so that I can rise again and speak to this another day.

The Speaker: The member for Downsview moves adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Hon Shelley Martel (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): The member is quite correct; His Honour the Lieutenant Governor awaits to give royal assent to certain bills.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario entered the chamber of the Legislative Assembly and took his seat upon the throne.

ROYAL ASSENT

SANCTION ROYALE

Hon Henry N.R. Jackman (Lieutenant Governor): Pray be seated.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly of the province has, at its present sittings thereof, passed certain bills to which, in the name of and on behalf of the said Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): The following are the titles of the bills to which your Honour's assent is prayed:

Bill 1, An Act to amend The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977 and the University Foundations Act, 1992 / Loi modifiant la loi intitulée The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977 et la Loi de 1992 sur les fondations universitaires

Bill 101, An Act to amend certain Acts concerning Long-Term Care / Loi modifiant certaines lois en ce qui concerne les soins de longue durée.

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): In Her Majesty's name, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor doth assent to these bills.

Au nom de Sa Majesté, Son Honneur le lieutenant-gouverneur sanctionne ces projets de loi.

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

The Speaker: It being nearly 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 1755.

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mardi 1 juin 1993

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 1993 modifiant la Loi sur l'impôt prélevé sur les employeurs relatif aux services de santé, projet de loi 27	
M. Laughren	1065
Loi de 1993 sur la protection de l'escarpement du Niagara, projet de loi 28	
M. Murdoch	1065
Loi de 1993 modifiant des lois en fonction du budget, projet de loi 29	
M. Laughren	1065
Loi de 1993 modifiant la Loi sur la taxe de vente au détail, projet de loi 30	
M. Laughren	1066
Loi de 1993 modifiant la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu, projet de loi 31	
M. Laughren	1066

SANCTION ROYALE

Loi de 1993 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne la Ryerson Polytechnic University, projet de loi 1	
Le lieutenant-gouverneur	1081
Loi de 1993 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne les soins de longue durée, projet de loi 101	
Le lieutenant-gouverneur	1081

CONTENTS

Tuesday 1 June 1993

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	
Northern health services	
Mr Ramsay	1039
Niagara Escarpment Commission	
Mr Murdoch	1039
Cor Bal	
Mr Waters	1039
Court reporters	
Mr Callahan	1040
Health care	
Mrs Cunningham	1040
Injured workers	
Mr White	1040
Eastern Ontario	
Mr Cleary	1040
Seniors' health services	
Mr Jackson	1041
Senior citizens' month	
Mr Mills	1041

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES	
Jobs Ontario Community Action	
Mr Lankin	1041
Ms Poole	1044
Mr Kwinter	1045
Mr Carr	1045
Forest industry	
Mr Hampton	1044
Mr Brown	1044
Mr Jordan	1045
Mr Murdoch	1045

ORAL QUESTIONS	
Social contract negotiations	
Mrs McLeod	1050
Mr Rae	1050, 1053
Mr Harris	1053
Youth unemployment	
Mrs McLeod	1052
Mr Rae	1052
Assisted housing	
Mrs Marland	1053
Ms Gigantes	1054
Soft drink containers	
Mr Offer	1055
Mr Wildman	1055

Insurance tax	
Mr Cousens	1056
Mr Laughren	1056
Social assistance reform	
Mrs Mathysen	1056
Mr Silipo	1056
Occupational health and safety	
Mr Mahoney	1057
Mr Mackenzie	1057
Education policy	
Mrs Cunningham	1058
Mr Cooke	1058
Recognition of Toronto Blue Jays	
Mr Perruzza	1059
Mr Pouliot	1059
Tourism industry	
Mr O'Neil	1060
Ms Swarbrick	1061

PETITIONS	
Library grants	
Mr Miclash	1062
Native hunting and fishing	
Mr McLean	1062
Gambling	
Mr Sutherland	1062
Mr Mills	1063
Mr Stockwell	1063
Ms Carter	1063
Mr Perruzza	1064
Mr Sutherland	1064
Mr McLean	1065
Public service employees	
Mr Cleary	1062
Mr Runciman	1064
Retail store hours	
Mr Arnott	1062
Mr Jim Wilson	1064
Economic environmental victory bond program	
Mr Murphy	1063
Gravenhurst Opera House	
Mr Waters	1064
Automobile insurance	
Mr Tilson	1064

FIRST READINGS	
Employer Health Tax Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 27	
Mr Laughren	1065

Niagara Escarpment Protection Act, 1993, Bill 28	
Mr Murdoch	1065
Budget Statute Law Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 29	
Mr Laughren	1065
Retail Sales Tax Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 30	
Mr Laughren	1066
Income Tax Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 31	
Mr Laughren	1066

SECOND READINGS	
Retail Business Holidays Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 38	
Mr Stockwell	1066, 1079
Mr Murphy	1079
Mr Mammoliti	1079
Mr Perruzza	1080

ROYAL ASSENT	
Ryerson Polytechnic University Statute Law Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 1	
The Lieutenant Governor	1081
Long-term Care Statute Law Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 101	
The Lieutenant Governor	1081

OTHER BUSINESS	
Visitors	
The Speaker	1041
Budget debate	
Mr Tilson	1046
The Speaker	1046, 1047, 1048
Mr Turnbull	1046
Mr Eves	1047
Mr Harris	1047
Mr Elston	1047
Mr Charlton	1048
Mr Sterling	1049

Use of question period	
Mr Arnott	1061
Mr Hamick	1061

Continued overleaf

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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 2 June 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 2 juin 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

Table of contents

Table of contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears on the outside back cover.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Wednesday 2 June 1993

The House met at 1332.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ANNIVERSARY OF QUEEN'S CORONATION

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I rise today to pay my respects on this happy occasion to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth on the 40th anniversary of her coronation. I'm sure that I speak for the people of Ontario when I convey our congratulations on the Queen's 40-year reign.

Today, when change engulfs many countries in strife and torment, we must pause for a moment to reflect upon all that we enjoy here in this great province: our proud Canadian heritage and our peaceful history, as symbolized by the crown and the monarchy. People the world over come to Canada in search of a life that is free from war and terror under the protection of a monarch whose rule embodies the spirit of tolerance, the rule of law, democratic government and tradition.

The monarchy of course is not immune from the pressures of the modern world that we all experience, but with grace and good intent Her Majesty has shown her willingness to change and respond to new demands and duties. In her acts and thoughts, she retains our loyalty and respect.

Today is indeed a special occasion, and I take great pride in speaking these words: Long live the Queen.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Today we are marking a most important Canadian anniversary. Forty years ago, on June 2, 1953, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was crowned Queen of Canada at Westminster Abbey. Five days earlier, on May 28, Her Majesty issued a proclamation by which she became the first monarch to officially bear the title Queen of Canada.

During the coronation, Her Majesty took a solemn oath to govern the peoples of Canada and her other realms according to their respective laws and customs. This ancient oath, taken by the Queen to the people of Canada—not to the country nor to the Constitution—is actually older than the oath of loyalty to the monarch taken by subjects and agents of the state, such as police officers.

On this great day of the fundamental rights and freedoms we enjoy as a community living under the crown, let us remember that such oaths have always been taken to emphasize, first and foremost, the supremacy of the person in our society.

As someone who's had the privilege of meeting members of the royal family, such as Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales and His Royal Highness Prince Edward, I join with all members of the Conservative caucus in expressing our sincere

love and loyalty to the head of state, Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen of Canada, especially on the 40th anniversary of Her Majesty's coronation. God save the Queen.

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): National Access Awareness Week symbolizes and encourages the increasing integration of persons with disabilities into all aspects of Canadian community life. Technological advances and increased public awareness are making a full and independent life possible for more and more people.

In Peterborough, we're concentrating on the housing aspect of accessibility. We are hosting the accessible house, a display built by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp, which is touring Canada. It is a 1,600-square-foot model and is designed to accommodate persons with visual, hearing or physical disabilities and those who are sensitive to the environment. All but two of the products used in this home are Canadian made.

The accessible house will be open for public viewing at the Peterborough Armoury this Friday, June 4, from 9 am to 9 pm and from 9 to 5 on Saturday and Sunday. It is hoped that more than 5,000 people will visit. Trained tour guides of all ages, many of whom are disabled, will demonstrate the modifications embodied in this home.

The city of Peterborough, the Peterborough Council for Persons with Disabilities and the local branch of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp have been working since October to bring this project to Peterborough. They deserve our thanks for bringing the accessible house to Peterborough during National Access Awareness Week. We hope that you will be able to visit this display.

PARAMEDIC SERVICES

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): I had the pleasure of attending the first planning meeting of Action Paramedics on May 25 at the Ottawa General Hospital. The purpose of this meeting was to mount a campaign that will promote CPR training within our community, to seek support for firefighter defibrillation and a paramedic program for Ottawa-Carleton.

The campaign is only in its infancy, but it continues to acquire momentum daily. At the end of the day, when the campaign meets with success, as it surely will, the people of Ottawa-Carleton will be trained in CPR through classes offered in our high schools.

Our firefighters, who arrive first on the scene of a cardiac arrest, will be able to restore a heartbeat through the use of defibrillators and our ambulance attendants, who arrive shortly thereafter, will be trained to carry out full paramedic duties so necessary to maintain life until

the emergency ward is reached.

Ottawa-Carleton has, I regret to say, one of the lowest survival rates for patients who experience a pre-hospital cardiac arrest in North America. Residents have a better chance of surviving cardiac arrest if they live in any one of more than 50 Canadian cities and towns that have paramedic programs.

There has been a groundswell of support from the residents of Ottawa-Carleton wanting access to the same emergency services that are currently enjoyed by many other areas in Ontario and across the country.

As the member from Ottawa South, I wish to draw the attention of the House, and especially the Minister of Health, to the lack of paramedic services within Ottawa itself and the many lives that are lost needlessly.

I am delighted to be a part of this campaign, and I wish to commend Dr Justin Maloney of the base hospital program and Sandra Clarke, executive director of the Advanced Coronary Treatment Foundation of Canada, for their vision and diligence in pursuing a comprehensive emergency treatment program for Ottawa-Carleton.

BOATING SAFETY

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): Later today, I will be introducing a private member's bill that I hope will increase the public awareness of the need for boater safety and education courses and help to acquaint operators with the rules of navigation and safe boating.

You are no doubt aware that this will be the fourth time that I have attempted to educate the public that there is a real problem with careless and uninformed operation of motor boats on this province's waterways.

None of my previous bills made it through the legislative process successfully, but I was gratified by the great deal of public attention they generated and the enormous amount of support they received from law enforcement officials, the medical community, cottage associations, individual members of the public and friends and relatives of boating accident victims.

1340

I recognize that the contents of my bill may not satisfy everyone with an interest in recreational boating. That's why I urge my colleagues here in the Legislature to eventually send it to a standing committee of the Legislature for public hearings and possible amending.

I know there are those who do not support the idea of a motorboat operator's certificate, there are those who believe that the maximum \$1,000 should be higher and there are those who do not think long-time boaters should be forced to take a boater safety and education course. To those people I say I included those features in this bill to get discussion and debate under way, and I'm certainly open to amending the legislation to meet concerns that may be raised during public hearings.

There's got to be an education process for people not

acquainted with the rules of safe boating and, if my campaign saves one life, then it's worth it.

ITALIAN NATIONAL DAY

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): I rise today to take part in the celebration of Italian National Day. I want to reiterate some comments I made on June 2, 1992, in this place.

In a referendum on June 2, 1946, Italians chose to become a republic, ending the monarchy in Italy. In Italy this is a national holiday and the official celebration is held in Rome. The parades and air shows are televised throughout the country.

Here in Canada celebrations are also held, usually the first Sunday in June, and there are many events in which Canadian Italians participate. There are more than 460,000 people of Italian heritage living in Ontario and they have made a significant contribution to the social, economic and cultural life of the province. The love of art, music and education and architecture which Italians brought with them has enriched each community in which they have chosen to live. Many early immigrants helped to build the homes and the infrastructure that we all now enjoy. The new generations are entering into all areas of community life, including the political structures.

I join in celebrating Italian National Day with pride and in recognition of all who have made a contribution to our heritage.

[Remarks in Italian]

TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I well recall the various critics for the NDP, when in opposition, lamenting the downloading of costs and responsibilities to the local level of government, and wonder where those critics are today as municipalities are compelled to pick up the tab for the Workers' Compensation Board coverage for hundreds of students and other on-the-job trainees; as engineering departments are forced to assume a greater portion or the entire cost of needed sewer and water projects; as the repair of broken roads is left to the local public works departments to finance; as insurance premiums are raised by the provincial government or the cost of sand and gravel boosted by the Ontario Treasurer; as school boards are required to continue mandated provincial programs with fewer provincial dollars; as hospitals are instructed to maintain quality health care with a smaller allocation from the Ministry of Health; as senior citizens' homes are expected to serve a growing population with less financial support from the NDP government; as transit authorities endeavour to serve a growing population with less money from the MTO; as recreation service needs are met with little or much less financial backing from Queen's Park; as the requirements of vulnerable individuals are addressed with lower funding from the

province. Where are the voices of indignation and concern that rang through this legislative chamber and in the union halls, community auditoriums and council chambers in years gone by? What's wrong, folks? Has the cat got your tongue?

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): May 31 to June 6 is National Access Awareness Week, a time when we reflect on the rights of disabled persons to accessible education, employment, housing, recreation and transportation. National Access Awareness Week is a way to raise society's awareness of barriers that prevent disabled persons from participating in the social and economic life of our nation. This week, we celebrate improved access and identify areas where there are still barriers to be removed.

Over the past year, there have been important advances in access. For example, the Toronto Transit Commission is retrofitting subway stations to make them wheelchair accessible.

There are still areas with serious access problems. For instance, I have tried to help three adults whose learning disabilities make it very hard to communicate using the written word. Computer technology and government programs should be available to them, but barriers within the Ontario NDP government have blocked their every attempt to gain access to these tools and services.

Finally, there have been frustrating setbacks. Provincial funding of many services for disabled persons has been reduced. Even though these services should be considered essential, these cutbacks are robbing disabled persons of basic human rights. I urge this Bob Rae NDP government to protect the rights of disabled persons when they reform programs and reduce spending.

DUNDAS KITE FESTIVAL

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): On June 4, the annual Dundas Kite Festival will be celebrating its 16th anniversary. From June 4 to June 6, downtown Dundas will be the place to be. The annual festival is sponsored by the town of Dundas, the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority and Chapman Books. Ms Joanna Chapman is the festival founder.

Kicking off the weekend celebration, there will be midnight madness shopping on Friday night, a sidewalk sale on Saturday, and on Sunday, June 6, everyone will be out flying their kites at the Dundas Valley Conservation Area on Governor's Road in Dundas. There will be a fine array of entertainers. Music as diverse as country, blues, reggae, Dixieland, jazz, rock, folk and classical will be complemented by clowns, jugglers, magicians, karate demos, line dancing instruction and the ever-popular karaoke machine, just to name a few.

There will be lots of great things for the kids to do, including free face-painting and a kite-making area

where a professional kite maker will be showing kids how to make their own kites. This festival is really a celebration of spring and it's an event for the entire family. So come to the 16th annual Dundas Kite Festival this weekend. Bring a picnic and spend the day.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): Yesterday, my colleague the Minister of Economic Development and Trade told the Legislature about Jobs Ontario Community Action. Under this initiative, the government will invest some \$300 million in community initiatives over three years. Jobs Ontario Community Action is a new way of making things happen locally. It is a recognition that communities themselves are the best equipped and best able to stimulate local economic activity.

Jobs Ontario Community Action will create greater cooperation in communities and it will support new partnerships: partnerships with local government, community groups, labour, business, educational institutions, cultural groups, credit unions, cooperatives, equity groups and other interested citizens.

Some of the people who have already been pioneering the sort of partnership I'm talking about are with us today in the gallery. I'd like to recognize Judy Goldie of the Canadian Co-operative Association; David Walsh of our local economic project; Frankie Liberty of the Economic Developers Council of Ontario; and Peter Nares of Self-Employment Development Initiatives.

As my colleague said, there are three main thrusts to the Jobs Ontario Community Action program: community development to help communities build their capacity to organize and plan for the future; community financing to help communities invest in themselves; and community capital to provide support for capital infrastructure projects identified as priorities through the planning process.

Today, as a component of the Jobs Ontario Community Action program, I will introduce legislation to address the area of community financing. This legislation, entitled the Community Economic Development Act, will provide tools to help communities invest in themselves and it will allow municipalities to participate directly in new ways to support economic development initiatives in their communities.

1350

In our consultation with community organizations, we discovered that there is a financing gap for this kind of entrepreneurial activity. Small entrepreneurs often lack sufficient collateral to qualify for bank loans, and other businesses can't afford the costs of pursuing private share placements or stock market issues to bring equity financing to their operation.

That's why our government feels strongly that this legislation is both timely and necessary. Through it, we are helping to narrow this capital gap.

The Community Economic Development Act will empower communities to raise their own investment capital, forge new economic partnerships and work with both traditional and non-traditional sources of expertise to provide capital for entrepreneurial opportunities.

Let me briefly outline these new tools and mechanisms.

To provide a vehicle for communities to coordinate their economic development activity, the legislation enables municipalities to participate in the establishment of community development corporations and support their operations.

Community development corporations will be non-profit organizations operated by a board of directors that will ideally reflect the wide diversity of people and organizations of their communities. The government intends to provide some financial assistance from Jobs Ontario Community Action to help communities set these organizations up.

Among other things, a community development corporation could sponsor new community financing tools that would also be created through legislation that I am introducing this afternoon: community loan funds and community investment share corporations.

Community loan funds will give local investors a chance to support small businesses in their community. The funds would provide access to loans in the range of \$500 to \$15,000 for all types of microenterprises. The government would guarantee the principal for local investors who put their money into these funds.

Community investment share corporations will be set up by local groups and they will provide a source of equity financing for enterprises and benefit the community as a whole. Again, the government would guarantee the principal.

The government is allocating \$10 million for the community loan fund guarantees and \$20 million for community investment share guarantees. We estimate that over the next five years, 40 community investment share corporations and 30 community loan funds will become operational in communities throughout Ontario. This will help communities create about 4,000 jobs.

The legislation will also permit municipalities to use more creative and flexible ways of financing facilities that benefit the entire community, such as community centre complexes, water and sewage facilities, roads and transit facilities. It would allow them to forge partnerships with the private sector to finance these public facilities. Municipalities will also be able to make better use of the pooled investments and borrowing arrangements among certain public sector institutions.

This legislation is an important part of our govern-

ment's 10-point plan to put Ontario back to work. By encouraging local investment in local ventures, it will support strong, self-reliant local economies which are so vital to Ontario's financial health.

This represents one more step along the road to economic recovery. It places investment power where it belongs—in communities throughout the province—because our government believes that it is local communities that will lead the way to jobs, growth and economic prosperity.

Mr Bernard Grandmaitre (Ottawa East): I don't know why it takes two different ministers to announce nothing in this House. On two different days we've heard the same thing. Yesterday afternoon, the Minister of Economic Development and Trade made the very same announcement as the Minister of Municipal Affairs today, and yet no new dollars were introduced in this enabling legislation.

To my surprise, yesterday the Minister of Economic Development said: "The funds for this program will come from a consolidation of a number of previously existing programs with support from Jobs Ontario Capital. Commitments made under these previously existing programs will be honoured."

One of my first questions to the minister is, how many dollars are left in this \$300-million program in which they're supposed to spend \$100 a year? Very few dollars are left, so it's only a commitment.

I find it very strange that this minister says, "Look, we're creating another partnership with communities, with municipalities," and yet only a few days ago they took away \$2 billion of possible investment, through taxation, from consumers' pockets. Unconditional grants to municipalities were cut by \$110 million and now they're saying, "Let's create a new partnership." Now that you've got all the responsibilities—downloading, I call it—they want to create a new partnership.

I don't know what people in Chatham and Kingston and the Windsor area and other areas that were part of the relocation program will say of today's announcement. These people expected to create jobs and have the necessary tools to create a better investing environment, and today the minister's announcement says nothing new. It's a fancy program. I wonder what small businesses, which produce 80% of all our jobs in the province of Ontario, will have to say about this new, fancy program. Not too much, because there is nothing in this program that will encourage them. They would like to get their unconditional grants back so that they can create jobs in their own municipalities.

Mr Speaker, again I want to point out to this House and point out to you that I find it very strange that it takes two ministers to announce a nothing program in this House.

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): I'd also like to comment on the announcement by the minister. Unfortunately, it is really a program that is quite grandiose in its concept, but that's all it is. It is just rhetoric and there really isn't very much in the way of substance.

Just to give you an example, in the minister's statement he says that the government is allocating \$10 million for community loan fund guarantees and \$20 million for community investment share guarantees. These are going to be allocated over a period of five years and they estimate that they will have 40 community investment share corporations and 35 community loan funds. That works out to eight share loan fund guarantees a year and five community loan fund guarantees.

Those community loan funds have got a maximum amount of guarantee of anywhere from \$500 to \$15,000. That is really a very insignificant amount of money to make any kind of impact anywhere in Ontario. We're talking about \$500 to \$15,000 for eight projects in Ontario in any given year over the next five years. In the other programs it's proportionately the same thing. So what we have is a program that is great in rhetoric, sounds good, makes good publicity, but if you take a look at it, it means absolutely nothing. I predict it will have very little, if any, impact on what is happening in this province.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I want to take the opportunity to make a few comments on the statement made by the minister today. This is the greatest episode of downloading on municipalities that I have ever seen. They have taken away a lot of the transfer grants, a lot of the transfer money. Now they're asking the municipalities to provide some financing and investment within their communities to try to help make the projects move ahead that they have.

The government is not looking at the long-term projects for the municipalities. They want the entire municipality to support community centre complexes, water and sewage facilities, roads and facilities. They want the local municipalities to be able to set up an investment whereby people can lend money to the municipality and the municipality in turn would add some money to it. The municipalities would end up in debt more than they ever have been. This is the greatest downloading I have ever seen.

1400

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): The statement that's before us today addresses essentially economic development and community investment, and I must say, to be fair, that I think it's well-intentioned. But when I say that, I'm aware of the fact that, for example, in the city of North York there are some 11 million square feet of empty industrial space as we speak. There's a great deal of vacant office space. In the

borough of East York, which I represent, one third of one of the prime industrial areas is vacant at this point.

We certainly need job creation, economic development in the province of Ontario. However, if you talk to the business community, such as the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, as I have; such as the Ontario Chamber of Commerce; such as the Metropolitan Toronto board of trade, and if you ask them, "How do we promote economic development?" this is not the scheme that you come up with. The business community will say, "To create jobs, to create economic development, don't increase the taxes." That's number one. They're being taxed to death and they can't afford any more taxes. The business community will say, "Repeal Bill 40, set a proper economic climate for industrial growth, for business growth in this province and it will happen." It won't happen if it's being generated by government.

Through the budget, which we're having a hard time debating, 50,000 jobs are going to be lost and there's going to be a depressing impact on economic development in the province of Ontario. We're getting confused messages from this government. On the one hand, the government, through its budget, is putting forward a program that is going to kill business in this province. On the other hand, they come forward today with an economic development plan that's doomed to failure because they are not setting the table.

The second part has to do with community investment within the municipalities. This has been described as downloading, and I agree with that. If we're really interested in promoting good community projects such as the Sheppard subway line, such as the extension of the Spadina line to York University, then let's get on and do it.

Are we interested in roads? The very minister who has made the statement today is the former Minister of Transportation who killed the Red Hill Creek Expressway in the city of Hamilton. On the one hand the minister is saying, "Let's support roads, let's support transit," on the other hand he killed the Red Hill Creek Expressway, an expressway that was desired by the citizens of the city of Hamilton, an expressway that was desired by the council in the city of Hamilton.

So let's be consistent. In my own municipality of East York, we would like the minister to support that the Leslie Street extension go to a joint environmental assessment review and Ontario Municipal Board hearing. The minister won't support that. This is a project that would create economic growth in the municipality of East York and the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto; this is a project that would improve the roads system in Metropolitan Toronto, and yet the minister will not support that project. So where is the consistency? There is none.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): In April 1993, when the social contract discussions were first initiated, this government and the Premier said that these were going to be new methods for openness and accountability to conduct public sector business. The Premier said—and this question is to the Premier—that decision-making affecting the public service would be fair and would reflect the input from those affected. He said you couldn't carry on your social contract negotiations without all of the participants at the table, but we've learned that there are now direct dealings going on solely between the government and CUPE. While other unions and the employer groups are excluded from the talks, the direct deals are being made with CUPE.

I want to know from the Premier what has changed and why he has decided to deal exclusively with CUPE while the others stand around twiddling their thumbs waiting to hear the results.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I accept the questions from the deputy leader of the Liberal Party in good grace, or House leader, whatever title he's been given this week. I just would say that his description of what's going on I think is a little bit at odds with my understanding of the facts. There have been any number of bilateral discussions between the government negotiators and any number of trade unions and any number of employer groups.

He may do his best, as I suspect members of the opposition would want to do, to upset the apple cart and describe things in ways that will cause ill feeling. That's certainly not my approach. There is a strong commitment by the government to taking a positive view. There will be a series of discussions which we hope will produce a comprehensive social contract, and there are not going to be any particularly special arrangements with any particular group of individuals. However, the Minister of Health, for example, has had discussions with the Ontario Medical Association, as one would expect.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: I don't think there's anything unusual or untoward in the fact that there may have been—I'm not sure what discussions the member is referring to—some discussions between a particular group of employees and a particular group of representatives of the government. I would think that would be perfectly normal in the circumstances, and I would think any set of discussions designed to get this thing—

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —done would be helpful and constructive.

Mr Elston: I was just trying to be helpful, because the rumours are rampant at the talks at the Royal York. In fact, there are a number of organizations that have been shut out of the private meetings between Mr Decter and Mr Ryan and Ms Darcy. In fact, there has been a considerable exclamation at the length of time those doors have been closed to the participants.

There is a belief that while some employer groups will have to make the tough decisions that Mr Premier told us about yesterday, they are excluded from what has become a direct dealing between the province and one single union, to the exclusion of other organizations. We have even heard, and there are rumours rampant at the talks this morning, that there has been a special document concerning job security delivered solely to CUPE, to the exclusion of other unions.

I want this Premier to tell me what it was that has changed between April 1993, when he released his initial bargaining strategy, and yesterday and today when he has obviously delivered something special to keep at least one of the unions in the talks, that being CUPE.

Hon Mr Rae: I have a lot of affection and respect for the member opposite. We've known each other in this House for a long time. I know that the better side of the member would not want to be somebody who based—yesterday we had questions based on headlines in the newspapers, which has its own perils, and I'm speaking from some experience in this regard—a lot of experience in this regard. I would say to him, it's one thing to set his next set of questions on rumours which I can tell the honourable member are quite false.

I can just answer his second question by saying that since the premise—and I'm here going back to just the simple logic—of his question is false, the rest of his question is based on hot air and I don't intend to further dignify it by a further response.

1410

Mr Elston: I am really cut by that one. This fellow is really quick on his feet. The Premier got his headline today in the paper, that he lashed out yesterday. It's very interesting because he unveiled to the newspapers his strategy about legislating these people or not legislating. It tells me something about the way this guy plans to conduct his new and open negotiations.

I just want to ask a single question to the Premier: Will he confirm, as we have been told, that in fact the Premier will be attending the talks tomorrow at the central table so that he can conduct the discussions and so that he can finalize the arrangements with respect to this social contract?

Hon Mr Rae: There are no such plans, I say very directly; not at all.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Yet.

Hon Mr Rae: No, there is no such intention. I

would say to him directly that it is true that I am going to the Royal York Hotel this afternoon at 4 o'clock, but I want to tell him it's to have a meeting with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the many good friends, my friends in the business advisory committee. The member from Wilson Heights will remember those conversations between former premiers and the business advisory council.

I will be in the Royal York Hotel between 4 o'clock and 5:30. It is a closed meeting with me and several business executives, which I know will cause deep resentment and concern in the hearts and ranks of the members of the Liberal and Conservative parties, but I can assure you that the members' interests, from what I've experienced in the last couple of months, are well represented around that table. That's the purpose of my going there. I am not planning to visit any other parts of the hotel, possibly a coffee shop if I stop for a Coca-Cola or something, but I have no other plans—

Interjection: Soda.

Hon Mr Rae: Or soda. I can't give any advertisements.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): Why not a Pepsi?

Hon Mr Rae: Or a Pepsi-Cola or a Sprite or any other drink. But I have no plans to visit any other parts of the hotel this afternoon or tomorrow.

WOMEN'S ISSUES

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): My question is for the minister responsible for women's issues. Recent actions of your government have made a mockery of the NDP's claim to represent and protect the interests of women in this province. As you are well aware, the Minister of Health has proposed draconian restrictions on new doctors in the areas of family medicine, paediatrics and psychiatry. These new doctors will for all intents and purposes be denied the right to practise in most of Ontario.

As the minister responsible for women's issues, you must be aware that 80% of the doctors in these three specialties are women and the vast majority of new women doctors are in these locked-out specialties. You must also be aware that only 23% of doctors in this province are women. This policy is going to further limit a woman's right to choose a woman doctor.

Where were you as the advocate for women when this devastating decision was made at the cabinet table and will you do your job and go to bat for these young women doctors and the right of women to choose a woman doctor?

Hon Marion Boyd (Minister Responsible for Women's Issues): Mr Speaker, this question belongs with the Minister of Health and I refer it to her.

Ms Poole: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I asked the minister specifically as the advocate for women in

this province. My two supplementaries are meant for other ministries.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I listened carefully. The member did in fact invite the minister to respond. In her question she indicated that it did have something to do with health, and the minister under the standing orders has the opportunity to refer the question, which she has done, which is perfectly in order.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm glad to respond to the question because I too share the member's concern that within all of our professions we have to have a better mix of both the diversity and the mix of sexes within this province that the professions have not reflected in the past. As part of the better management of our professional resources, I certainly trust that the Ontario Medical Association, as the representative for the doctors within this province, will be as aware as the member is and as I am of the need, as we better manage the system, to ensure equity, accessibility and affordability, that we take into account the need to make sure that we have the appropriate doctors in the appropriate places where they are needed.

Ms Poole: It's really unfortunate that the minister responsible for women's issues is refusing to advocate for women in this province and refusing to answer questions, because it's going to be interesting to see how the Minister of Health defends the conduct of the minister responsible for women's issues on child care.

With great fanfare this government has announced wage enhancements and down payments on pay equity to boost child care workers' salaries. Right now we're in the midst of debating pay equity legislation to assist the child care sector. Yet in the social contract talks your government is undoing all the progress made in raising critically undervalued child care workers' salaries.

You have proposed that child care wage subsidy payments be rolled back and frozen for three years. You have proposed slashing salaries and benefits for all child care staff earning \$25,000 or more a year, and recently in your generosity you raised this to \$30,000. You have proposed that wages and benefits be frozen for three years and that new staff will start at 5% below current levels.

The Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Ms Poole: The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care has walked away from the table in disgust and with good cause. This is a mockery. This government has taken with the one hand and given with the other.

The Speaker: Could the member place a question, please.

Ms Poole: Surely the minister responsible for women's issues would have agreed that child care workers have already paid the price and shared the pain not only now but for the last years and decades.

The Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Ms Poole: I would like the Minister of Health, since this has already been referred to her, to answer why the minister responsible for women's issues, as an advocate for women's—

The Speaker: Would the member take her seat, please. I've asked the member several times to please place a question.

Ms Poole: Mr Speaker, I did ask the question. I asked the Minister of Health if she could tell us why the minister responsible for women's issues has not advocated that child care workers be given an exemption from your social contract manipulations.

Hon Mrs Grier: I guess I fail to see how that was supplementary to the first question, but I'm more than happy to answer it, because one of the points that I think the member opposite has failed to grasp is that this government, as a government, is concerned about women's issues and that the actions this government has taken both to advance the progress of women in this province and to protect the interests of women is exemplary and more than any other government in this province has ever done.

If the member wants to be specific with respect to child care workers, I would remind her of the additional number of spaces, 8,200 spaces that this government has approved recently and which are being taken up at a very fast rate in response to part of our Jobs Ontario Training program. We're the only government that's ever done that.

Secondly, the floor on the social contract of a \$30,000 limit will in fact exempt many child care workers from the provisions of the social contract. I suspect that's not anything her government would ever have done.

Ms Poole: It's obvious that this minister is not up to date with what her government is not doing for women in this province. First of all, she refers to Jobs Ontario and what a wonderful job it's doing. Let me tell her that of the 20,000 spaces they had allocated for the child care component of Jobs Ontario, only 300 were taken up last year.

Do you know why, Minister? It is because you have advertised this program and the minister responsible for women's issues advertised it as a program that was geared to women and to helping them escape these low-paid jobs. But let me tell you that two thirds of Jobs Ontario placements are men, so I don't know how you can defend your record in this regard.

Secondly, as far as the social contract, much of the social contract still applies to the rest of the child care workers who are going to have their wage enhancements taken away. It will make a mockery of what you claim to be doing with pay equity, and I would like to say to

you, you cannot defend what you are not doing for women in this province.

I want this minister to give me an answer. Has the minister responsible for women's issues been advocating on these issues at the cabinet table, and if she has, why have you not listened?

Hon Mrs Grier: If the question is, who is advocating for women at the cabinet table and around this province, I stand here proudly and say every single member of this government.

1420

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Premier on the social contract talks. There are some who, perhaps for political reasons or otherwise, want the social contract talks to fail.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): Are you amongst them?

Mr Harris: Premier, you know that I am not one of those. You would know that I have supported the social contract talks. I have supported you in initiating them. I have supported and applauded your initial efforts and I've supported the goal, as I understand it, to reduce the size and the cost of government. You would know why, Premier—and I'm not at the table. You know I'm not at the table, so I don't know what is happening there, what is at the table. Some from your side suggest they're working because I'm not there, and perhaps that's true.

My good friend Sid Ryan has now said that he will continue negotiations as long as they include job security. I really would like to ask you about this, because there is a difference between job security, which I understand employees being concerned about, which means no one is fired as a result of these talks, and position security, which means that the public service remains at the same size that it is today.

I would like you to assure me that what Michael Decter is trying to achieve at these talks is not a short-term fix, not a one- or two-year fix to help you through a couple of budget years, but in fact a permanent downsizing of the costs of the government payroll. Can you give us that assurance?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Without commenting extensively on the entire preamble of the member's question—

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Which was extensive.

Hon Mr Rae: —which was extensive and very interesting, I would say to him that the short answer to his question is yes, that what we are looking for, and the Treasurer, the Minister of Finance, has stated this very clearly in the brilliant budget speech he delivered 10 days ago, is a major restructuring of the public sector and that this involves the permanent reduction of \$2

billion in terms of the total compensation and payroll costs in the broader public sector.

Mr Harris: Thank you, Premier, I appreciate that, because when we had things like pay pause, that sounded like a one- or two-year fix, or 12 days off. If that was a temporary proposal while you made the permanent changes, then we could still be with you. But if it's temporary, we cannot.

I want to be very clear that I have consistently said that we have a hardworking and dedicated group of individuals in the public service. The problem is that you and the Liberals over the last eight years increased it to such a size that the taxpayer base couldn't sustain it. I think you realize that and recognize that, and it's something that had to be done and we support that's something that has to be done.

I want to be very clear that I don't believe it is the public servants' fault that you and the Liberals hired all the extra ones that weren't sustainable, that in fact this was a management problem over the past eight years, that high-spending government is not the individual's fault.

Given that natural attrition in the broader public service would mean nearly 56,000 fewer jobs over the next three years if you had a hiring freeze, quite frankly, 56,000 jobs through attrition with a hiring freeze is about 12,000 to 15,000 more than you need to achieve at the end of your three-year period, a permanent 5% reduction in the size and cost of the civil service. Has this been put on the table in the negotiation talks, so that at the end of the three-year period we have a permanent downsizing, not a one-year fix or not a June fix but a permanent downsizing?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the leader conclude his question, please.

Mr Harris: Is that on the table?

Hon Mr Rae: Obviously the issue of attrition is something that we're keenly aware of, as well as the question of whether there are any people hired to replace people who are retiring or who retire early in response to various incentives or the natural attrition rate.

The only thing I would say to him is that we have found—and I think this is an experience that's shared by all governments throughout the country—that the attrition rate is somewhat different today than it was four or five years ago, as one would naturally expect, given the overall circumstances we face in the economy. But obviously, the issue of attrition and the natural changes in the size of the public service, teachers and everyone else, is one of the factors that's part of the overall framework for a discussion.

Mr Harris: I appreciate the figures are changing a little bit, and you know I'm concerned about the upsizing of the private sector as well. It's one of the

reasons people seem to be hanging on a little more. But without retirement incentives, whether early retirement or any golden handshakes, the current rate, as I understand it, is about 2%. Over three years, that would downsize over 6% of the civil service, and the goal at the end of three years is to downsize by 5% or something a little less than 5%.

I suggest to you that natural attrition will allow you to structurally downsize government at the end of the three-year period and still provide a cushion for cabinet to provide exceptions. There will be some areas obviously—fire, police; perhaps in teaching we will look at some areas—where this will not work, but this would be a permanent solution; not a slash-and-burn 12 days off—that solves it for one year—but a permanent solution.

I want to be clear to you—I'm not at the table, maybe the reports are not accurate—that massive layoffs to meet an artificial target hurt everybody and solve nothing, but a logical plan over the three-year period gives us a permanent downsizing in the size and cost of government. So I would ask you if this is at the table. I note that you have pulled a gun and have said: "Bang. If we don't settle, we'll do it unilaterally." That, I'm sure, is facilitating the talks.

The Speaker: Would the leader place his question, please.

Mr Harris: Would you not agree with me that that kind of permanent proposal is far better for all concerned than the short-term fix of 12 days off without pay, those types of proposals which will only be good as long as the 12 days off without pay are in effect?

Hon Mr Rae: I admire the sense of humour and irony of the leader of the third party.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Come on. You liked me better before.

Hon Mr Rae: I like you too and I haven't lost my affection for you either, even when sorely tested.

I would say to the leader of the third party that I think he's perhaps stretching things a little when he suggests that I'm the one who's originated the term "Bang." I think he's the one who came up with "Bang, bang, bang," and I just said that's what he would do. If he is now realizing that he doesn't want to be Mr Bang Bang Bang any more, that's his problem.

Mr Harris: I do.

Hon Mr Rae: He still does? Okay.

I would just say to the honourable member, attrition is a factor, but if he thinks that attrition alone can effect a structural change, he's mistaken, because part of what we are also discussing is all the issues that are at work in every large organization around the world: the question of layering, the question of simplifying structures, reducing the number of layers between the

people who are delivering services and those who are in the senior levels of government.

The need for us to deal with that issue in a sensitive way does involve, in our view, some earlier retirements, some other voluntary exit options, as they're called, and various ways of dealing with the issue as well as attrition.

In terms of looking at attrition as obviously one of the factors that must be borne in mind, as we look at a three-year approach to the restructuring, which will be in a sense the first three years, because restructuring is something that needs to go on literally all the time in this world of very rapid change in which we're living, then that's the approach that we're taking.

Mr Harris: I appreciate that, for example, in education alone you can save more than 5% without one teacher losing a job. There are some layers there above the teacher in the classroom that have to be dealt with, and I think you're aware of that.

1430

LABOUR LEGISLATION

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My second question to the Premier is this: With the exception of massive tax hikes, perhaps the most destructive thing that your government has done to this province and the private sector and the ability to upsize has been your unbalanced and unfair labour legislation.

This Friday is the first anniversary of the introduction of Bill 40 to workers and employers in this province. We told you when you introduced this bill that if you didn't amend it substantially, it was destructive legislation that only helped union bosses, not union workers. But you have been so fixated on the social contract, perhaps, you have ignored the private sector. They need help. Bill 40 is a barrier to many people in the private sector, to employers and employees. I would ask you, for the sake of upsizing the private sector, will you agree today to revisit Bill 40?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): No, and I think the—I'll leave it at that: No.

Mr Harris: Premier, let me give you one little example of what Bill 40 means.

JBL Househelp and Janitorial Services in Windsor: This is a small company that is owned by Abiola Afolabi. She runs this business with the help of her family. She won a contract with the Windsor Utilities Commission. However, under Bill 40, she was told that she would be forced to hire the employees of the firm that currently has the contract. Since this was too costly and unacceptable for her and her family business, this forced her out of the business. She withdrew from the job. She lost the contract.

Can you explain to me how legislation like Bill 40 that drives people out of business, that is a barrier for

new business people wishing to bid on contracts—in this case government contracts is this barrier—can you explain to me how this is fair legislation?

Hon Mr Rae: If I may say so, again, the leader of the third party was in government himself. He will no doubt know from his colleague and good friend and ideological supporter, the former Minister of Labour Bob Elgie, that successor rights and the principle of successor rights and the issue of subcontracting, particularly of services, is an issue on which there have been various kinds of legislation for some time.

This legislation was strengthened by this government, it's true. But here we're looking at situations where the services that were critically provided were provided by the employees, who were providing the services in the contract to which the member is referring. It's those employees, it's those workers, who I would imagine would not be making a whole lot of money, who would not be among the higher paid. We're attempting to create some sense of security for them in their workplace so that by virtue of some government action that's taken or some other action that's taken with respect to subcontracts, we're trying to ensure that the people who are providing those services are in fact provided a degree of security.

I think that's a reasonable approach. I don't want to see, every time a contract changes—we don't want to see people thrown out on the street by virtue of the fact that people have undercut the bids. It doesn't add to any jobs. It doesn't create any new jobs. You're not talking about any new employment being provided. We're talking about services being provided and we're talking about providing some degree of security for the people who are working there. I think that given the fact that those people tend to be lower paid, those people tend to be women—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —they tend to be newly arrived immigrants in the country, it seems to me those are the workers whom we want to be providing a degree of protection for in Ontario in 1993.

Mr Harris: Mrs Afolabi came to Canada from Nigeria 10 years ago—perhaps that isn't recent enough for you—believing that this was a place of opportunity, but your government is putting up roadblocks. She planned to do the work, she and her children.

This morning, as well, I met with a group from the black business community. They told me that "fairness" does not exist in the vocabulary of your government. I thought this was a very strong statement for them to make. But in fact they said that access to government contracts, equal access, was the biggest barrier that they found, both government and private sector contracts, getting a foot in the door, that for new businesses that

black business people were developing, this was their biggest concern and biggest problem.

Diamond Tobin-West, of one of the groups I met with this morning, president of Cadd and Microcomputer Specialists, explained this to me: The black community believes it does not have fair access to government contracts and its program.

Bill 40, for example, favours the incumbent. Bill 40 favours the status quo. Bill 40 favours the establishment. I ask you how you can continue to defend legislation that makes—

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): Listen to a Tory?

The Speaker: Order, the member for Durham East.

Mr Harris: —it difficult for new companies, new Canadians, to get a break and get access to government jobs.

Mr Mills: How can you say that?

Mr Harris: All she wanted to do was save the taxpayers money and do the job. All she wanted was a fair chance.

The Speaker: Would the leader of the third party please come to order.

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to the honourable member—and I've listened carefully to his question—that in terms of what he is proposing today—

Mr Harris: Is to scrap Bill 40.

Hon Mr Rae: I know what your ideological line is. I'm just saying that in your attempt to draw the argument, I think you're adding an element which is, if I may so, most unhelpful, to be polite, about trying to resolve the issue. The suggestion—

Mr Harris: That is the result. Thirty black business leaders told me this morning that is one of the problems.

Hon Mr Rae: I suppose now he's going on the record as saying that Bill 40 is racially discriminatory. Is that what he's saying now?

Mr Harris: I'm telling you what the black business people told me. They said Bill 40 is a barrier to access.

Hon Mr Rae: No, you're not. Don't get away with that. I'm saying to you that you're lowering the tone of the entire debate by adding an element that has nothing at all to do with the issue.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Don't change the words. Typical dipper, changing the words.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Harris: You use your own words and I use mine. Check Hansard for mine.

Hon Mr Rae: Well, you've just used them.

Mr Stockwell: Typical dippers. You haven't got advance—

The Speaker: The member for Etobicoke West is

out of order.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): Went too far, Mike.

Mr Stockwell: They came to us, Floyd. That is what they said. Typical dipper.

The Speaker: The member for Etobicoke West remains out of order.

Mr Harris: He can sit wherever he wants.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): He can't interject from wherever he wants.

The Speaker: Yes, not even the right seat.

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr Charles Beer (York North): My question is to the Minister of Education and Training. Over the past couple of months the education system has been given notice that between your expenditure control package, the social contract and the increased taxes and fees announced in the recent budget, our public education system will lose close to \$1 billion. Given that school boards have just reached the halfway mark in their fiscal year, can you tell school boards, is this figure your bottom line and will public education lose any more funding this year?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I think that what the member has done is take the figures from the expenditure control. He's taken the social contract discussions and taken the same assumptions that some school boards have taken across the province that the money is just going to be pulled out of their budgets and that there's not going to be a social contract arrived at. I don't believe those are the assumptions that he should operate under or that any of us should operate under.

I'm very optimistic that an agreement will be achieved, and if an agreement is achieved, then there will be arrangements made where the school boards will save money as a result of the social contract and the provincial government will not have the negative impact on school boards or the local taxpayers that you're predicting.

1440

Mr Beer: It is very interesting that the minister, for the first time, starts talking about what may be some sort of plan as to how he is approaching this whole issue, because what school boards don't know, what teachers don't know, what parents don't know, what this Legislature doesn't know is, what is your plan? How are you going forward in working with your partners? Because I think you would accept, as do I, that a billion dollars is a lot of money and that we all share that we want to see quality education in the classrooms where our kids are.

My second question is, when, and will you begin today to tell us what your plan is? Because you're

responsible for the education system of this province. Tomorrow, according to the standing orders of the House under section 58, you should be presenting the estimates for the Ministry of Education. I would assume that in those estimates you will be setting out very clearly how these expenditures are going to be held.

In addition, we would like to know what other plans you have. Are you going to be lifting mandated programs from school boards? Are you going to be bringing in legislation to affect collective agreements and pupil-teacher ratios? Are you going to be doing the same thing with respect to working conditions? Are you going to be announcing your general legislative grants for 1994 so school boards know what they're going to be working with in 1993 and 1994? The greatest enemy we have right now in the chaos that is out there is the unknown.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member conclude his question, please.

Mr Beer: Will you begin to tell us what your plan is? You're responsible. Your government is responsible. What is your plan to bring about these changes?

Hon Mr Cooke: The critic for the official opposition may be in the dark, but the school boards, the teachers and all the people in the system who are involved in the social contract negotiations and have been involved with the Ministry of Education in explanations as to what the expenditure control plan is for the education system know exactly what the plan is and know exactly what the goal is, through the social contract negotiations. They know what's going on. They know what the plan is. I suggest that the critic for the official opposition should get up to date and find out what the plan is.

RACE RELATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Attorney General. This morning in Kitchener, three neo-Nazis entered a store owned by a Jewish proprietor. They uttered death threats and anti-Semitic slogans. They then proceeded to demolish the store. They have been arrested.

You would know, as I think all of us in this House would know, that anti-Semitism has been on the rise around the world and that Ontario, Canada, has not been immune to the escalation of racism, hatred and anti-Semitism. Last winter, it took days for a swastika to be removed from the side of the Legislature. Last week in Ottawa, an anti-racist group clashed with the neo-Nazis. While there is apparently sufficient evidence today against Ernst Zundel, no action has proceeded by the government of Ontario.

I think we in this Legislature all share and have learned in sharing that we are guilty by our silence. I think you have the power to act and I think you have been told that there is enough evidence for you to act.

How long is your ministry going to remain idle on this matter?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): Our ministry has not remained idle on this issue and in fact has been working very closely, not only with the police who are involved in the various incidents that the member mentions, but also in working with our federal colleagues around the various issues of law that arise.

I certainly am aware of the accusations that have been there and I can assure the member that when I am advised that there is enough evidence for us to proceed by the ministry, then that would obviously be what my choice would be. To this point, there are issues that I cannot discuss in this Legislature that have not given me that assurance at this point in time.

I want the member to understand that we share very, very much the concern that he's expressing about the various incidents that have happened. We have met recently with members of the Jewish community to talk about the various issues that arise, their concerns, our concerns, what kinds of things we need to do. I think the member should know that in our federal-provincial-territorial meetings of ministers of justice last week, we also discussed, on a national basis, the concerns that we have across the nation and the inadequacy of some of our Criminal Code tools to deal appropriately with it.

I would like the member to be very clear that once I am assured by those within the ministry that there are grounds to lay charges, as I must give permission to do in any of these cases, then that would certainly be the course of action I would take.

Mr Harris: It's certainly well known out there that legal counsel has advised there is sufficient evidence to bring charges against Ernst Zundel and that's not happened.

We are hearing all the time from police that they are not receiving the support from your ministry that they feel they should be getting, based upon the information that they are gathering and that they are bringing forward.

We have had an anti-hate law for 22 years, and only four charges have been laid and there have only been two successful prosecutions in that 22-year period.

Some racist organizations, as we see this rise, obviously feel for some reason or other that they have been given carte blanche to spread their hatred in this province, and when you look at the record you can understand why they feel that way.

I say to you that we as legislators must send a clear signal that racism, that anti-Semitic behaviour, is unacceptable, that this takes priority, that we are going to provide the resources, that no society, no matter how much consumer goods it may give us or money it may give us, is worth its salt if we allow this to happen. Our education system is part of it, and I don't think there's

been enough. I think that all of us as legislators are going to have to do more, and I'm asking you, as the minister of justice, as the chief minister of justice in Ontario, to commit today that charges will in fact be laid wherever there is evidence of racial injustice, that we will be proceeding, that if we lose some of those cases, we can then say the law needs to be changed. We have enough examples here of behaviour unacceptable to Ontarians that if we don't lay charges and if we don't take these actions, we're going to be sitting here with a 22-year-old law that is not getting the job done. Will you commit to do that on all of our behalfs?

Hon Mrs Boyd: It would be entirely inappropriate for me to make a commitment around laying charges against any individual or group in the direct way that the member is suggesting, and he knows that absolutely in this case. I have already told him that where the legal advice I get tells me that there is a case that can be successfully prosecuted or even has the hope of success in the court, that would be my course of action.

The member is well aware there are very conflicting legal opinions around the issues in these cases, and that is extremely important.

The member was quite clear that yes, there had been charges laid but there had been very few successful prosecutions. Every time there is an unsuccessful prosecution, we see an increase in this behaviour because the law is so inadequate that we are not able to get successful prosecutions that have adequate penalties.

So we are concentrating on two things. We are indeed looking at the merits of every case, and I can assure the member very strongly that I take my responsibility extremely seriously, and when we believe the merits of any case warrant a charge and a prosecution, that would be the course of action.

The second thing I can assure the member of is that there are many other things we need to do to counter racism and that our government has taken many of those actions and will continue to take those actions, and we are pleased to hear the support of our opposition friends in that regard.

1450

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): My question is to the Premier. Last month I stood in this House to raise the issue on behalf of 3,000 auto workers at the GM van plant, as their plant was about to be closed as a result of free trade, which the federal Tories rammed through this country, and not Bill 40, as the leader of the third party has indicated.

Today we've heard about an announcement in General Motors in Oshawa that the Oshawa truck assembly centre will receive some dollars.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. The

member for Oakville South, please come to order.

Mr Owens: If he's going to heckle, Mr Speaker, at least he could sit in his right seat. I would appreciate that. Thank you.

Contrary to the prehistoric fearmongering coming from the third party today, I'd like to ask the Premier to explain to this House, and particularly to those members of the third party, the role of the government in this historic announcement in Oshawa today.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): There was a good-news announcement today in Oshawa. I was expecting the question on this to be coming from either the third party or the official opposition, but I appreciate very much the question coming on the first anniversary of Bill 40, because in fact General Motors has announced that in a competition with two US-based plants in Indiana and Michigan the Oshawa plant was successful in its bid for a third shift at the truck plant in Oshawa.

Ontario played a constructive role. I met with the chairman of the Canadian company, Mr Peapples, together with the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. We had some very good discussions, together with the auto workers. Ontario is providing \$5 million to assist in retraining workers displaced from other GM facilities, which we think will help to put people back to work.

I can tell the honourable member that we're very proud of our association with this successful announcement today. I think if you add this announcement today to the announcement yesterday which the Minister of Natural Resources made, it shows that all the naysayers and the doom-and-gloom participants on the other side have got it wrong and that in fact Ontario is a good place to do business, that people are choosing to do business here and that they're choosing Oshawa as a site to do business.

We're very proud of our association with the good citizens of Oshawa and with the auto workers in Oshawa. We're proud to be walking both with the citizens of Oshawa and with the good citizens of General Motors as we create new jobs in the province of Ontario.

Mr Owens: By way of supplementary, as I indicated in my initial question, 3,000 workers—

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Durham East, please come to order.

Mr Owens: I, along with the members for Scarborough West and Scarborough East, attended the funeral service for the Scarborough van plant. Again, in case the members across in the third party didn't hear, 3,000 jobs were lost in Scarborough as a result of free trade.

Premier, my question is to you. As part of the continuing economic program of this government, how

will this announcement benefit the members of my riding as well as other Scarborough ridings?

Hon Mr Rae: Again, the other aspect of the news which I think is good even in difficult times is that the workers who've been laid off at the Scarborough van plant will be redeployed initially to fill these new jobs in Oshawa. The skills that have been built up in Scarborough for many, many years will be put to good use in the new truck shift line in Oshawa.

I can say to the member that I think this is an indication, it's a vote of confidence, even in a time of change and of dramatic reduction of its overall workforce by General Motors in North America—it's shown very clearly that, case by case, Chrysler has chosen Ontario, Ford has chosen Ontario, GM has chosen Ontario. I think it's time that members of the opposition started to choose Ontario as well and recognize that there are a lot of good things going on.

SOFT DRINK CONTAINERS

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I have a question to the Attorney General.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. I'm not sure she heard. The member for Mississauga North has a question for the Attorney General.

Mr Offer: Yesterday I asked a question to the Minister of Environment and Energy. The question focused firstly on your government's regulation that at least 30% of soft drinks be sold in refillable containers; secondly, that the average monthly refillable figure for the last six months was about 7%; and, thirdly, that no charges had been laid since June 1991. I'm now going to ask a page to take over a copy of the Hansard of yesterday's questions.

You will see in the minister's statement it reads: "The question of charges is one that has been considered carefully and the decision was made some time ago and that decision is under review, that we should try to negotiate agreements that would make it possible to resolve this issue without charges if that were an appropriate way to move. However, we are actively considering a number of options."

The investigations and enforcement branch of the Ministry of Environment is supposed to be independent. As the Attorney General of this province, is it proper and appropriate that the independence of this branch be compromised by any interference as to whether charges will or will not be laid?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I'm not sure that I understand the implication of the member's question. If he is suggesting that the independence has been compromised, I would be concerned about that. It is the job of the enforcement branch of the ministry to look into each case and determine on the facts of the matter whether or not charges should be laid.

If the decision is that charges would be laid and the legal advice is that indeed it is a prosecutable offence, then obviously our ministry would support that decision.

Mr Offer: By way of supplementary, I hope the Attorney General will read the question and answer of yesterday's Hansard. With respect to your response to my question, will you commit to this Legislature today that you will investigate and report back to this chamber whether there has been interference in the independence of the investigations and enforcement branch of the Ministry of Environment in the laying of charges in this matter?

Hon Mrs Boyd: Certainly I will.

TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): My question is for the Treasurer and it concerns his budget. Tourism and hospitality operators have reacted with shock, anger and frustration two full weeks after the announcement of your budget. You've destroyed our prospects with foreign travellers by eliminating the provincial sales tax rebate program, you've destroyed our prospects with business people by reducing the meals and entertainment write-off to 50% and you've destroyed the holiday plans of thousands of Ontario families by confiscating their disposable income through your income tax hikes, that double whack that takes effect July 1, the start of the summer tourism season.

How can you possibly justify this devastating kick in the teeth to the thousands of Ontarians employed in tourism and hospitality who are going to lose their jobs because of your budget?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): The member for Wellington would really have to stretch his argument a long way to make the case that this budget would do any damage whatsoever to the tourist industry. On the contrary—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Laughren: Could I be allowed to make the counterargument, at least? The member talked about the rebate. I think the day is gone when governments—and we're no exception here in this case—can continue to have a program with a supporting bureaucracy when less than 1% of tourists ever applied for the rebate. I don't believe that we should continue to have programs that have that small an uptake. I think it makes no sense whatsoever.

On the question—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

1500

Hon Mr Laughren: I appreciate your assistance, Mr Speaker. On the question of the meals and the expenses, a meal deduction, companies being allowed to write down meals from 80% of the cost down to 50%, that is

hardly punitive. That's already been recommended as a move to take place in the United States, so it would hardly be a surprise to tourists coming to this province that we're reducing it from 80% to 50%. I think that's only fair. There's nothing untoward about that.

Finally, for hotels in the greater Toronto area, the cancellation of the commercial concentration tax I believe will save the industry about \$15 million a year. So, if anything, I would say this is a pro-tourism budget, certainly not an anti-tourism budget.

Mr Arnott: Certainly we on this side were pleased that the commercial concentration tax was lifted. It only applies to the greater Toronto area. There is a lot more to the province, and the member for Nickel Belt knows that very well. But by your answer it's clear that you have no understanding whatsoever of the devastation you've caused the tourism and hospitality sector with your budget, with your tax increases on top of five years of Liberal tax-and-spend policies and 33 separate tax increases.

Your policies don't invite people to come to travel and vacation in Ontario. Your policies are telling people to stay away from Ontario. How do you expect the tourism industry in Ontario to recover?

Hon Mr Laughren: The one part of the member's first question I didn't respond to, because I was running out of time and the Speaker was looking askance at me, had to do with the question of income tax. Surely to goodness the member opposite, the member from Wellington, doesn't expect that people in the tourist industry should be exempt from the level of taxation that other people in this province have to bear.

Mr Arnott: No, they can't afford to go on vacations.

Hon Mr Laughren: Well, you cannot separate people in the tourist industry and say that they shouldn't be assuming their fair share of the burden.

Finally, I hope the member from Wellington would never ask me to justify the tax-and-spend policies of the Liberal government when it was in office.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PROGRAM

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): My question is for the Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet. The internship program that the Management Board administers is a valuable employment equity program that has been quite successful over the past eight years. I understand that this program has been cut. A number of my constituents were quite hopeful this program would provide the work experience and environment they would otherwise not have access to. Could the Chair please clarify the status of this program?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I thank the member for the question. This is a question that's similar to the one that the Leader of the Opposition raised a couple of weeks ago, and I'd like to take a moment to clarify the situation.

Firstly, let me tell the member that we have not cancelled the employment equity internship program. In fact, during the expenditure reduction process we made a very explicit decision not to cancel it. It is true that there will be no first-year applicants accepted into the program this year. The program has been a very successful program over the last eight years but because, as members will recall, we announced in last year's budget a staff reduction of 2,500, which we've been proceeding to implement over the course of the last year, we haven't been able to take the graduates of this program into the civil service.

We've had a hard time placing people, so all of the second-year participants in the program will continue this year, there will be no new applicants taken in this year, and then next year new applicants will be accepted into the program again.

Mr Malkowski: I'm wondering if this cut will affect people who have recently been placed for training and work experience.

Hon Mr Charlton: All of those currently in the program will continue to the end of the program.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSE

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): Mr Speaker, I just gave you notice that I would be rising on a question of personal privilege. As the opposition critic for women's issues, this afternoon I directed a question to the minister responsible for women's issues. The minister in turn referred my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr Speaker, if you look at section 33(f) of the standing orders, it states, "A minister to whom an oral question is directed may refer the question to another minister who is responsible for the subject matter to which the question relates." I specifically draw your attention to the words "who is responsible for the subject matter."

My question was very clearly one about the minister's advocacy on behalf of women, and it also very clearly asked the minister where she was as an advocate for women on this issue and if, as minister responsible for women's issues, she would go to bat for women.

My question was not directed to the Minister of Health for a very good reason. This policy has a major impact on women and it is the minister responsible for women's issues' job, in fact her duty, to advocate for women. The major job of this ministry is advocacy. It cannot spend large sums of money. It does not have direct responsibility for a lot of programs. Instead it's an advocacy position within many ministries.

It was very clear that the referral was inappropriate and in fact the Minister of Health was not in a position to answer my three questions, which were all related to the minister responsible for women's issues' advocacy on behalf of women relating to health care, child care and Jobs Ontario.

Mr Speaker, I will tell you, if you allow the minister to refer questions of advocacy, then ipso facto you have denied me the right and in fact the ability to do my job as women's issues critic for the official opposition. I can't even file a notice of dissatisfaction, because the minister responsible for women's issues would not be required to answer, the Minister of Health would, and she can't answer those questions on advocacy.

This issue has ramifications far beyond women's issues. Questions for critics on any advocacy ministry, whether women's issues, seniors or francophone affairs, could be impacted by this precedent.

Mr Speaker, I would ask you to look at the Hansard from today's proceedings and to give me a decision whether in fact this question was appropriately referred, because it is my feeling that if this is denied, then I cannot appropriately do my job in this Legislature as opposition critic for women's issues.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I'm going to deal with this point of order and—

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): On the same point of order, Mr Speaker—

The Speaker: But you didn't ask the question. With respect, I'd be happy to hear the member later on his particular point of order.

To the member for Eglinton, while I stand by the ruling which I made earlier, I am of course pleased to take a look at Hansard. What I observe is that there seemed to be some genuine misunderstanding as to the precise nature of the question being posed, and in the view of the Chair at the time, the question had an implication of health matters. Therefore, when the minister asked, as is her right to do so, to refer the question, I allowed that referral to occur.

The member is quite right that, based on the circumstances, she cannot file her dissatisfaction except with the minister who responded. However, the confusion has been noted and it may be that the minister responsible for women's issues may wish to discuss this matter with you outside of the chamber or the member may wish to come back to the House at oral questions on another occasion to pose the question.

Having said that, as I stated before, I am always pleased to take a look at Hansard and judge accordingly. The member for Scarborough North.

Mr Curling: I was a bit confused too in the response from the Minister of Health. When she was asked, "Who's the minister responsible for women's issues?" she said, "All ministers are." The point where I'm confused is, why is it then that we do have a minister responsible for women's issues in the meantime, and spending all that amount of money in that ministry, then to say, "All ministers are responsible for women's issues"? I feel there has been confusion over on this side.

The Speaker: The member doesn't want to raise a point of confusion, I'm sure.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): Mr Speaker, on that point, surely the member would understand that even in my responsibility for natives, all ministers should be ultimately responsible for taking into account aboriginal rights in making decisions.

The Speaker: All members are responsible for a number of things. The member for Eglinton has a new point.

Ms Poole: Mr Speaker, if I could just make one further comment before you review the Hansard, I just wanted to quote you directly from my questions today, the last two paragraphs of my question. It said, "Minister, where were you as the advocate for women when this devastating decision was made at the cabinet table"—

The Speaker: Would the member please take her seat. I've already indicated to the member that I'm pleased to take a look at Hansard, and what she is quoting from now are remarks which are contained in Hansard.

1510

PETITIONS

GAMBLING

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I have a petition which has been signed by a number of members of Eden United Church, which is opposing the establishment of gambling casinos in the province of Ontario. The petition reads:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, *Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome*, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

As I've said, this is signed by members of Eden United Church.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I have signed my name to it. It's from St Paul's United Church in Orillia and it has 97 signatures.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Peterborough, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

There are about 117 signatures to this petition.

SENIORS' HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly:

"We strongly object to the latest obscenity that this government has foisted on the taxpayers of Ontario and in particular the senior citizens of Ontario. I am referring to Floyd Laughren's \$4-billion reduction to health care services.

"The senior citizens of Ontario deserve more and better consideration from the government of the province of Ontario, and while some of us may be a bit feeble, most of us have a very long memory."

I have signed this petition.

GAMBLING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, a petition which reads as follows:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I agree with this 100% and I'm very happy to sign it.

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): Another petition from Windsor, which adds to the thousands of signatures from Windsor alone against casino gambling:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown conclusively that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted at any time to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I'm very pleased to affix my signature to this fine and important petition.

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): I have a petition signed by approximately 40 individuals from my riding and it reads:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

That petition is signed by about 100 constituents and by me.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

This petition is endorsed by 5,200 residents from Ontario, the town of Port Elgin and the surrounding area around the Bruce nuclear power development and I affix my signature.

1520

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I have a petition here:

"Whereas we feel that the Canada-US free trade deal has done immeasurable damage to the economy of the province of Ontario, causing the loss of more than 45,000 jobs in Ontario alone; and

"Whereas we feel the proposed North American free trade agreement will have an even more devastating effect on Ontario, resulting in losses of not only more jobs, but also a reduction of our environmental standards, our labour standards, our social standards, our workers' rights and our overall quality of life;

"We petition the Legislature of Ontario in Toronto to fight this trade deal with whatever means possible, and we ask Mr White, the MPP for Durham Centre, to present the petition on our behalf to the Ontario Legislature and to forward it, on our behalf, to Ottawa."

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will severely undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

I have affixed my signature to this petition. As you know, Mr Speaker, this is a petition that includes some 15,600-plus signatures in support of the continued operation of Bruce A.

GAMBLING

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): I too have a petition addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

Signed by 43 people in the Ingleside, Lunenburg, Newington area, and I have affixed my signature to it.

POST-POLIO SYNDROME

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario with 91 signatures which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to establish a post-polio clinic in the Rehabilitation Centre of Ottawa-Carleton for the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of patients and to disseminate information so that the estimated 1,000 known polio survivors in the centre's catchment area can receive adequate treatment and that the medical profession be educated regarding the post-polio syndrome."

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all the units at Bruce A."

As you know from previous petitions read in, there are several reasons for supporting Bruce A. I won't read those out now. I have attached my signature to support the petition. Over 15,600 people have also signed this petition.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I've got a petition here:

"Whereas we feel that the US-Canada free trade deal

has done immeasurable damage to the economy of the province of Ontario, causing the loss of more than 45,000 jobs in Ontario alone; and

"Whereas we feel that the proposed North American free trade agreement will have an even more devastating effect on Ontario, resulting in losses of not only more jobs, but also it will cause a reduction in environmental standards, labour standards, workers' rights and an overall quality of life,

"We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to fight this deal with whatever means possible, and to petition the House of Commons in Ottawa to stop this deal now."

It's been signed by folks like Jim Freeman, by the McCloskeys, and Len Burns here, and I affix my name to it as well.

SENIORS' HEALTH SERVICES

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition signed by 25 seniors in my riding who are concerned about the reduction in health care services, causing the Ontario drug benefit program to be jeopardized. I also signed this petition.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Ms Haeck from the standing committee on regulations and private bills presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr4, An Act respecting the City of London and Covent Garden Building Incorporated

Bill Pr85, An Act to revive The Optimist Club of Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

Your committee begs to report the following bills with amendments:

Bill Pr13, An Act respecting the City of London

Bill Pr19, An Act respecting the Town of Gravenhurst

Your committee recommends that the fees and the actual cost of printing be remitted on Bill Pr85, An Act to revive The Optimist Club of Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Mrs Marland from the standing committee on government agencies presented the committee's third report.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I would like to make a brief statement on one of the appointments in that report, Ms Rosemary Brown, to the chief commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. I wish her success on behalf of all of us.

As Mr Curling said in the committee this morning, this is a very important appointment to a very important commission, agency, in this province and we wish her Godspeed in her work on behalf of the people in this province.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Pursuant to standing order 106(g)(11), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT
ÉCONOMIQUE COMMUNAUTAIRE

On motion by Mr Philip, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 40, An Act to stimulate Economic Development through the Creation of Community Economic Development Corporations and through certain amendments to the Education Act, the Municipal Act, the Planning Act and the Parkway Belt Planning and Development Act / Loi visant à stimuler le développement économique grâce à la création de sociétés de développement économique communautaire et à certaines modifications apportées à la Loi sur l'éducation, à la Loi sur les municipalités, à la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire et à la Loi sur la planification et l'aménagement d'une ceinture de promenade.

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): This act, which is a fairly large and complicated act, gives communities in Ontario new ways to raise their own investment capital and forge new grass-roots economic partnerships through legislation which we've just introduced. It also contains amendments to the Planning Act that will save both time and money by creating a smoother and more efficient and effective planning and development review process.

MOTOR BOAT OPERATORS
CERTIFICATION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'ACCREDITATION
DES UTILISATEURS DE BATEAUX À MOTEUR

On motion by Mr McLean, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 41, An Act to provide for the Certification of Motor Boat Operators / Loi prévoyant l'accréditation des utilisateurs de bateaux à moteur.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): The bill, which applies only in respect to motor boats propelled by engines of at least 10 horsepower, prohibits the operation of such a motor boat by any person who does not have a motor boat operator's certificate.

The bill requires every person to carry a motor boat operator's certificate while operating a motor boat to which the bill applies and to produce it when requested to do so by a police officer. If unable or unwilling to produce the certificate, the motor boat operator is required to give the police officer his or her name and

address.

The bill creates the offences of careless operation of a motor boat and impaired operation of a motor boat.

Finally, the person who contravenes any of the provisions of the bill or certain regulations made under the bill is liable to pay a fine not exceeding \$1,000 and in some cases to have his or her motor boat operator's certificate suspended or revoked.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE PLAN D'INVESTISSEMENT

Mr Owens, on behalf of Mr Laughren, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 17, An Act to provide for the Capital Investment Plan of the Government of Ontario and for certain other matters related to financial administration / Loi prévoyant le plan d'investissement du gouvernement de l'Ontario et concernant d'autres questions relatives à l'administration financière.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member have any opening comments?

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): In February of this year the Premier announced our government's economic renewal strategy. In this economic renewal strategy we stated quite clearly our commitment to invest in jobs and public infrastructure. These two items are extremely vital in keeping Ontario competitive.

I'm pleased to be here today to take action on the strategy with the Capital Investment Plan Act, 1993.

This piece of legislation will establish four crown corporations that are mandated to seek new sources of funding and innovative partnerships with the private and public sectors. It also creates new ways of financing capital projects for the education and health sectors.

From the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp we will be able to speed development of rapid transit and highways within the province. Projects such as the Eglinton West subway, the Sheppard line, the Spadina lines and the Scarborough RT expansion will create jobs and benefit local businesses as well as aid commuters across the city.

The corporation will seek innovative means of financing, such as contributions from businesses that benefit from their proximity to the transit lines. Tolls will help pay for the building of Highway 407.

The Ontario Clean Water Agency will assist municipalities to provide more cost-effective water and sewage services.

With the Ontario Financing Authority we will be creating an agent with expertise and focus to manage the financing activities of the province in these corporations.

As part of the financing authority, the Province of

Ontario Savings Offices will become part of the financing authority and their mandate will be not only to receive the deposits of Ontarians, as they have in the past, but also to develop new financing instruments and develop a more business-like and entrepreneurial operation.

Some questions have been raised with respect to these corporations. One of these has been accountability. I'm here today to tell this House that these crown corporations will clearly be accountable to the government for their activities. Each crown corporation will have a board of directors that reports to a minister. They will receive their policy direction from the government and annual reports will be tabled here in the Legislature.

This type of accountability will allow the government to keep its finger on the pulse of the corporations while allowing these corporations to operate in the entrepreneurial and more creative way that this province needs in terms of bringing capital investment to the province.

In terms of the new types of financing that we will be looking at, we will certainly be looking at loan-based financing. This will enable universities, hospitals and school boards to access loan-based financing, which will be a help to them in terms of spreading out the payments for projects over a longer period of time. The loan-based financing for capital projects will provide, as I say, a more stable approach to the funding and will allow projects to get up to speed in a faster manner.

This change, which we are describing as being transparent, will not affect the costs of these partners. We're clearly being open about the changes and how they will affect our transfer partners. I think the important thing to note here is that these partners have been consulted with extensively on these changes.

In closing, I want to reinforce that this is a new way of doing business in the province of Ontario. It is going to allow partnerships to exist between the private sector and the government through these crown corporations to develop the important capital infrastructure projects that would otherwise not be possible. It will enable the government to do more for economic renewal and job creation across the province during a time of serious fiscal constraints. We'll be able to, again, move ahead with the project sooner. It will also enable us to take advantage of lower construction costs that are now available.

Ontario's ways of developing infrastructure must keep pace with the reality of today's competitive world. The entrepreneurial partnerships that this bill allows will encourage efficient and more cost-effective operations. By using new and creative ways to invest in jobs and infrastructure now, we're laying the foundation for a strong and competitive future for all Ontarians.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Further debate?

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I'm pleased to begin the debate on what's called Bill 17. I guess I would first indicate to the government that we have some significant concerns regarding the bill.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): Surprise, surprise.

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education and Training said, "Surprise, surprise." I'd just say to him that I asked the Premier in December if he would consider bringing forward this legislation early so we would have an opportunity to look at it before the budget was presented. I asked the question of the Premier: "Premier, my question is this: If you put the budget together on the basis of these capital corporations, prepare it on a basis on which we have had no discussion, will you undertake to send to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, when its pre-budget hearings are taking place, your proposals?"

The reason we wanted to do that is that fundamental to the budget is this new way of funding capital. There are some major concerns about this. The government may not want to have a full and open discussion on this, but I think the people of Ontario deserve it.

While the Minister of Education may barrack over in his seat about the need for it, I would say to him that these capital corporations will be spending literally billions of dollars, running up literally billions of dollars of debt, and I think it's important that the people of the province have a debate about it.

I would expect that this bill will be sent to our committee, that there will be an opportunity for a thorough and open debate, that the public will be involved in looking at it.

The reason I say the bill is very important—I will give you a few examples and then we'll get into some details.

In the budget the Treasurer talks about loan-based financing. Just so everyone out there understands, the province spends about \$600 million a year—this may get the interest of the ministers—on school, college, university and hospital capital. That's been going on for years and years and years, \$600 million to \$700 million a year. The government says it will spend again this year \$600 million on that, and it is anticipated, I gather, that you will continue to spend \$600 million a year.

1540

One of the objects of this bill is to allow that to continue to go on, not in the form of grants—it used to be that the province provided school boards with grants for this capital construction. The school board got approval to build a school; the province then provided a grant for that school. Similarly with hospitals, the hospital got approval for an expansion or a new hospital; the province provided the money.

What's going to happen now, and I'm not sure many

people are aware of this, is that the schools are going to have to, believe it or not, borrow that money on the province's behalf. The schools will have to go out and borrow the \$600 million that used to come in the form of a grant. They're going to have to borrow that money and lend it to the province. So the province is going to, each year, under this bill and under the budget, go out and ask school boards and hospitals to borrow for them, for the province, \$600 million a year.

Hon Mr Cooke: That's not true.

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education is shaking his head and saying, "That's not true." That is true. That's exactly what's going to happen. What's going to happen under this bill is, every year the province is going to run up about \$600 million of brand-new debt. It won't show up on the province's books, though; it will be on a school board's books or on a hospital's books—\$600 million. What we're going to do is add that kind of debt, hidden debt, to the people of this province. That's one thing we will be wanting to look at very clearly.

The second thing is that the parliamentary assistant said that these are schedule 4 agencies and they will be subject to the normal scrutiny by the Legislature. The jargon that's used around the Legislature is that they are schedule 4 agencies. They're independent, arm's-length agencies. They will have their own board of directors. They will be like workers' compensation; that's an independent agency with its own board at its own arm's length.

That's the second thing we will want to look at, the arm's-length nature of this, and whether this an area where we want to, as a public body, turn over to an independent, arm's-length agency the decision-making and the authority to make those decisions. I'd say to the public: That's a debate we need to have. Daily we hear in the Legislature, when a question might get asked about something like workers' compensation, "I'm sorry, but that's an independent agency that has the authority to make those decisions." That will be the second thing.

The third thing is that one of these agencies, called, I guess, the Ontario Financing Authority, will take over all of the authority for managing our roughly \$80 billion worth of debt. This is an enormous part of the day-to-day operations of government. The way we as an elected body monitor how we manage that \$80 billion worth of debt is extremely important, but it's going to be turned over to this schedule 4 crown agency, the Ontario Financing Authority. We'll want to understand: What's the public benefit in doing that? What's the public benefit in turning over \$80 billion of management to an independent schedule 4 agency?

Mr Owens: Lower borrowing costs.

Mr Phillips: The member says, "Lower borrowing

costs." I will want to have the evidence of that, then. The parliamentary assistant says there will be lower borrowing costs. That will be something we'll want to see, because it is my understanding that this authority is going to take on the responsibility for raising more capital than just for the province. It will want to raise capital for school boards; it will want to raise capital for hospitals. If that's going to result in lower interest costs, then we'll want to see the evidence of that.

I think everyone out there should recognize that we're talking about a significant number of people. The number, as I understand it, will be about 3,000 public servants who currently are in the public service doing work in the various ministries and will be transferred over to these organizations—3,000 people, I suspect, with an operating budget of, I don't know, a couple of hundred million dollars. This is an enormous transfer of numbers of people from the traditional public service over into these schedule 4 agencies. Again, we'll want to know what the benefits of that are. The parliamentary assistant, I hope, as we move to public hearings, will have an opportunity to tell us the reasons for that.

There are elements in here that we're attracted to and that I support, our party supports. We will not be without positive comment on what we think are some of the positive elements in here that we will hope to retain as we attempt to modify the bill.

I don't think there's any doubt but that we do need to look at new partnerships with the private sector. I think the public expect it. There are some really creative opportunities to be doing that. In my own community of Scarborough, there's an opportunity for some private sector involvement in rapid transit that sounds attractive. I understand that, and we will be supportive of attempting to find the mechanisms and the vehicles for that.

I think there are probably many examples in the transportation area where we can be looking at private sector and other involvement. There may also be some in the realty area and some in the transportation area. So that element has our support.

The second thing that has some attraction for us is that it does provide an opportunity to invest countercyclically. I think one of the challenges in government is that when the economy is moving along very, very well, it's a time when probably the investment by the public sector in infrastructure should slow up a little bit. We should probably find the vehicles that we can invest countercyclically, and this bill provides that opportunity where we can have some flexibility in that.

I don't think there's any doubt that our economic success in Ontario does depend on a solid infrastructure. I think we've been fortunate to have a good sewer and water system, but those things aren't guaranteed. I think the transportation system has been good, but those things aren't guaranteed and there's no doubt that our future economic success depends on ensuring that in the

province we do invest in these areas, that we stay ahead of the problem.

I've tried to outline for the public and the government, which is moving forward with this bill, our concerns. They are real and substantial, and I would say that none of us should underestimate how important this matter is.

We are talking about setting up an agency to manage, for example, The biggest issue of bonds in the world last year. I think the biggest issue of bonds in the world was done by the Ontario government. So we're talking about setting up an agency that's going to manage that magnitude, that size of financing.

The reason I'm highlighting the school, the college and university and the hospital capital on this new way of financing, which essentially is to get the school boards to borrow the money so the province can fulfil its obligation, the province says, "We'll pay it back over 20 years."

But I say to the government, we are going to run up, every year, almost \$600 million worth of debt there. Six years from now, the debt just in this one area alone, where we'll have the province asking the school boards and the colleges and the hospitals that borrow the money, the debt in that one area alone will be equal to the total debt of the province of New Brunswick.

I just use that as an illustration of the magnitude of spending and debt we're talking about here. The budget calls it loan-based financing. If one just read it, you would think: "Gee, this sounds interesting. The province is going to loan money to the school boards." It is exactly the opposite; the school boards are loaning the money to the province.

1550

What the budget says here is that this will not impose any additional cost on the institutions, on the school boards, as the province will provide the institutions with annual instalments required to repay the loans. So it is a loan, not from the province to the institutions; it's a loan the opposite of that.

We are dealing here with a matter of an enormous amount of money and one that I hope the public will take an interest in when it moves to our committee and we'll have an opportunity to comment on it.

I want to spend some time on a little bit more detailed discussion on each of these areas, because the bill probably has three major components. The one is providing the format for a new way of financing school, college, university, hospital capital. The second component of the bill is this whole new way of managing the financing of the province, and that's the Ontario Financing Authority. The third area of the bill is the setting up of these capital corporations, the transportation capital corporation, the sewer and water capital corporation and the realty corporation. I'd like to spend a few moments

dealing with each of them.

The first one is this funding of the school, hospital, college, university capital. I went back many years, and the province spends about \$600 million to \$700 million a year in this area. Based on everything I've read, I suspect the province plans to continue to spend at that rate. Everything I've seen from the government says we have to, if anything, increase our spending on capital, so I expect we're talking each and every year of spending \$600 million to \$700 million.

As I said, effective April 1, 1993—this is already retroactive in the bill—rather than it going in the form of a grant, in the form of a loan payable by the province. The province is going to owe \$600 million a year.

I did my own calculations. If the government has better calculations, I'd like to see them. In fact I've requested them and I'm sure I'll get them shortly. In fairness, I just requested them yesterday and I'd hope as we move to the committee we can see them. So it's not a question of the staff not giving them.

But the numbers I have say, just on the capital of the schools, colleges, universities and hospitals, that in five years the province will owe almost \$3 billion on that. Obviously in 10 years it will be almost \$6 billion a year, and in 10 years the province will be spending probably \$600 million a year just to service the debt on that. The province will have the full, legal obligation to repay that. There can be no doubt about that. That has to be the guarantee that's been given to the hospitals and the school boards.

The question here is, what's the public benefit? Where is the public benefit in doing it this way? I personally think we may pay more money. I personally think the interest rates may be higher. Certainly they'll be higher if the individual school boards have to go out and raise the money, because the province can borrow its money, presumably, at a far better interest rate than an individual school board could do it. It said in the bill the Ontario Financing Authority may help them with that but doesn't have to.

That is my first issue on the bill. Where is the public interest being served?

I will tell you—it will come as no surprise, I suspect, to the government caucus—my own feeling on why this is happening is an attempt to hide \$600 million a year of spending and to hide \$600 million a year of debt. As a matter of fact, had the budget been prepared on the same basis this year as last year, the government would have had to show \$600 million more of spending on the books and show \$600 million more worth of debt. But because of this little manoeuvre where they say, "No, no, we are going to borrow the money from these organizations and pay them back over 20 years," they show \$600 million less spending, \$600 million less debt.

Perhaps some viewers out there may wonder why this is important. I think last year's budget had some things in there that I don't feel were as honest as they should have been. The day the budget came out, Mr Speaker, you may recall that my leader and others said: "Listen, you're not reporting the finances properly. You've put in money there that you're not going to get. You've recorded sales that you're not going to get. You've delayed payments that are just simply putting off to next year."

We said, and you can go back and look at the Hansard, the real deficit's going to be \$12 billion. This was a year ago, exactly a year ago. That's exactly what happened. My judgement is, if the government had had to report accurately the finances of the province and if the government had said our deficit's going to be \$12 billion, I think that the public would have had a far different reaction. I don't think the government could have passed that budget last year—passed the public budget; they may have forced it through the House.

So in our judgement, by not being forthcoming with the figures, by trying to mask or hide the real numbers, we do the public an enormous disservice. I would say to the government that I can't find where the public interest is being served on this. I think that the public are being told that on this specific one, the spending is \$600 million less than it is, and we are going to pile up an enormous amount of hidden debt, all of which in the end, as we all know, has to be paid off.

That is probably my first and most significant concern about the bill, that it is designed to set up this new financing, and I think it's a mistake to not be properly charging it and not be properly showing it. As I say, I think we'll have a good discussion about that.

The second part of the bill is the establishment of this Ontario Financing Authority. It is designed, as I read the bill, to manage all the capital, all the debt servicing role of the province. As I said earlier in my talk, that's an enormous responsibility. In fact, I think for all of us in the Legislature, it has become one of our highest priorities.

Indeed, my own feeling is that what drove the budget presentation this year was first and foremost trying to ensure that the province didn't have its credit rating dropped. Had it had the credit rating dropped—and I said I thought the budget would be prepared in a way that the credit agencies would find acceptable—it would have dramatically increased the cost of the debt interest, of servicing the debt, and I think would have sent a very negative signal. But here we are, about to turn over to an independent, schedule 4, arm's-length agency all the management of our debt.

Again, I ask where is the benefit to the public? I've already talked about where we can be supportive in the bill, but in this particular case I want to know where the benefit to the public is. Is it going to, as the parlia-

mentary assistant said, result in lower interest rates? It will be important to prove that this will actually result in lower interest rates.

1600

Will it improve the accountability to the public, to the Legislature? The bill itself says—and this is jargon around here—that it will be excluded from the general revenue account. It will be set aside from the normal books. In terms of accountability, I don't see that. In fact, if you talk to the accounting community across the country, it will say that one of the problems with governments is that they don't provide a full and accurate accounting, and that the books of governments do not properly array the finances of the organizations.

There have been some provinces that have made great strides. I would hope that the province of Ontario—this is a mild aside, but I raise it because I think there's the risk that we're heading in the opposite direction from better accounting and a better disclosure—that we would very shortly revise the way the books in this province are kept and the accounting is handled. I would hope that all parties would support that. I know our party supports it; I know that the third party, the Conservative Party, supports a much fuller disclosure of the finances of the province.

If you read reports done very recently in Saskatchewan and British Columbia by the provincial auditors and by groups looking at the finances, they actually, in my judgement, are heading in the opposite direction from what this bill plans to do, which is to move much of the spending "off-book," get it out of the view of the public, I think because it allows reporting of a lower expenditure and a lower debt.

I think that by setting up this schedule 4 agency, it takes it more away from the public scrutiny, and I don't think there's anything quite as important right now as public scrutiny of where the finances of the province are.

Interjection.

Mr Phillips: The parliamentary assistant is saying something over there. I think he's saying that it's already there. Workers' compensation is a classic example. The Minister of Labour, day after day, will get up here and say: "You understand that the WCB is an independent, arm's-length agency. I can't be telling them what to do." They signed a contract for a new building and essentially the government has said, "Listen, they have the legal authority to do that, to build their own new building." So it is important to raise that, whether the public will be served better or worse by setting up this independent agency.

I will say that within the financing authority, if it is going to be the intention to use it to allow school boards and hospitals and municipalities to raise more capital, if that's one of the key reasons for doing it, I

suggest that we're not looking at reducing the interest costs, because presumably the provincial guarantee will be on this Ontario Financing Authority. It will be backstopped by the provincial guarantee. I don't see that if the provincial guarantee simply takes on more debt—that's what's happening with Ontario Hydro. The bond-rating agencies look at the fact that the province has a guarantee on Ontario Hydro which, by the way, the province charges, I think, \$200 million a year for, but that inevitably raises the interest rates.

The government is saying to the opposition that this is going to result in lower interest rates. I say it will be, at committee, interesting to make sure that is the case, because if they're taking on more debt for more organizations, I think most financial analysts would tell you that's not going to result in lower interest rates; that's going to result in higher interest rates.

Mr Owens: I don't think so, Gerry.

Mr Phillips: Well, there he goes. He says he doesn't think so, and I'm just saying it will be important for the opposition and the committee members to see the evidence of that, because most of the experience I've seen suggests that if an organization takes on more debt, it likely will have trouble in doing it at a lower interest rate.

The three capital corporations, the Ontario Realty Corp, the Ontario Clean Water Agency and the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp—as I said in my opening comments, I think the ones where there may be the most merit may be transportation and clean water.

The Ontario Realty Corp is of interest to me, major interest, because as I understand what the government's doing here, one way it kept the revenue number up last year is that it transferred, I believe, \$350 million worth of land into what will become the Ontario Realty Corp. This is a little technical, but it's called the Ontario Land Corp right now, because it's existing and they could transfer the land there. I believe the bill's intention is to change the name to the Ontario Realty Corp.

Just so everybody understands what the government did last year, it transferred \$350 million worth of government land into this crown agency. So it was moving paper around. They said: "All right, you've got the \$350 million worth of land. Give us a cheque for \$350 million." That showed up as revenue—\$350 million worth of land sold to the Ontario Realty Corp, which is this government-run crown agency.

I gather that there's a plan to transfer another \$250 million worth of land into it this year, and the Ontario Realty Corp gives the province \$250 million.

I also gather that the intention is to begin to transfer government buildings into the Ontario Realty Corp, so what we'll see is—I don't think I'm exaggerating here—that the Macdonald Block could very easily be sold to the Ontario Realty Corp. It's then sold, the

government shows that as revenue and then the government takes out a long-term lease on that.

Now, what's the problem with that? I guess the issue that has to be raised again is, where's the public interest here? What really will happen is the government will show as revenue whatever the Ontario Realty Corp decides the building is worth, and it could be worth, theoretically, a substantial amount of money. So that will be shown as revenue, and I suspect it will more likely be shown as revenue in the 1995 budget than the 1994 budget. Then the government says, "We now have a lease." In other words, we will stay in there and we will pay annually probably a fairly substantial amount of money.

What essentially it's like, Mr Speaker, is you or I, in our personal lives, finally get our house paid off. That is an obligation that is gone, but we fall on to some tough times. So we decide, although we're going to keep spending but we're not making enough money, "Let's remortgage the house." A house that essentially was paid off, the Macdonald Block, will be completely remortgaged.

My understanding—the government, I hope, will be helpful at the committee stage—is that is what the intention is, to systematically move government buildings into the Ontario Realty Corp. I gather there are up to, I think, 1,800 employees that it is contemplated will move into this organization.

As a subissue, on the land, at one stage there was a Housing First policy in the province. I don't know whether that still exists or not. I don't know whether it is the intention. As the government transfers the land into this Ontario Realty Corp and takes the revenue into its budget, I don't know whether there is still a Housing First policy or not. I just don't know, and I hope the government can clarify it for us. So on this one, again I ask the question, where is the public interest being served?

I don't know how much more land there is to go into this organization. Right now, I believe there's about \$600 million worth of government land that has been moved into it, and the realty corporation now has paid the government \$600 million for that, I guess theoretically, surplus land. That, of the three capital corporations, is the one that I think raises perhaps even the most questions.

1610

The second one is the Ontario Clean Water Agency. There may be some merit in this, in some form of an agency dealing with water and, I would assume, sewage treatment and what not, in that there may be an opportunity to leverage some private sector money. It may be a vehicle for ensuring that in tough times we don't ignore the very real infrastructure needs and may provide some more flexibility when the economy is booming to not necessarily overheat the economy. I

understand there will be about 1,000 public servants who will move over into this very major schedule 4 agency.

The object of the corporation, as stated in the legislation, is to finance, build and operate water and sewage works on a cost-recovery basis. I think we'll want to look at what I call—where will the revenue come from on this? Where will the revenue come from? My understanding is that the revenue likely comes from an increase in the water fees. I gather that's the intent behind the legislation, that water rates should go up substantially.

Hon Mr Cooke: What did Bob Nixon think?

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education and Training is barracking again about previous governments. I am not here to defend previous governments. I am here to look at the merits of the plan. I will say that the Minister of Education and the government, when they come to committee, had better tell the people where the funds are going to come from. Where will the funds come from? Will it come from higher water rates, and if so, let's just be honest with ourselves. Let's spell that out. Right now we don't see that. We have no indication of where the revenue for this will come from, and until we see that—

Hon Mr Cooke: What was Bob Nixon going to do?

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education is barracking again, and I'll go back to a concern I raised with him. When we find that we are running up enormous hidden debts by the shenanigans on school capital, I think the people of the province will want to have a chance to comment on it. In this particular case, on the clean water agency, we'll want to know how it's funded. We'll want to know how much the water rates will go up to fund it.

On the clean water agency, I think the people of the province will need to know how well the 1,000 people will be paid who are moving on to it. Where will the revenue for that come from? Where will the revenue come from to fund the, I guess, billions of dollars of infrastructure?

Hon Mr Cooke: Typical opposition party, just opposition for the sake of opposition.

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education is saying, "Opposition for opposition's sake." I will say to him that the people of Ontario care about the amount of debt you are running up. They care about the fact that this organization will run up, as I said before, \$600 million worth of hidden debt just on school, hospital, and college and university capital.

The third thing that we want to talk about is the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp. I said earlier that I see some merit in finding ways to leverage private sector money into helping to refurbish our infrastructure. I see some merit in looking creatively at new

alternatives. I will want to know, however—and I hope everyone realizes that what is being proposed here is shifting, in total, almost \$2 billion a year of spending off the government books into these organizations. That money, in all of the province's finances, has already been taken out. If you look at the three-year forecast, the government has assumed it's going to take \$1.7 billion out of its spending into these capital corporations.

Interjection.

Mr Phillips: "It shows them," the member says. Not in the normal fashion that has been shown in the past and not fully disclosed.

On the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp, as I said before, there is some merit in looking at ways to leverage some new funding. Again, the government has provided us with no indication of what we will call a stream of revenue. How will this be funded? What revenue will come into this organization? How will the debt be serviced? How will the new construction be serviced? How will all of the new employees be paid?

To begin to wrap up our comments on this bill, I will say to the public that this is not an inconsequential bill. This bill changes very fundamentally the whole way that capital is financed in the province for schools, hospitals, universities. In five years there will be new debt there, \$3 billion. I think one of the concepts is, "Well, these things last 20 years and therefore we should only show one twentieth of the expenses," but the fact is, you spend \$600 million a year every year, year after year after year, and the thought of only showing one twentieth of that expense I think is misleading.

On the Ontario Financing Authority, the issue is, where is the public being served? Where is the benefit here of moving this to this schedule 4 agency? The parliamentary assistant said, "Well, it would be lower interest rates." There's one possible benefit. We'll want to see the evidence of that. But we'll want to know very clearly where the public interest is being served.

On the three capital corporations, I've already indicated that my concern is more with the realty corporation than the other two. The realty corporation, I believe, is going to be an organization—we already saw it last year: \$350 million worth of government land was transferred there and the \$350 million used as revenue. This year it's \$250 million. I dare say what we will do is begin to transfer government buildings in here, take the money out for the sale of the buildings and then we'll take on a lease that will run for ever. What we've done is we have added significant annual costs where there were no annual costs.

I will go back to what I said to the Premier in December. We should have been dealing with this bill far earlier. If he'd brought forward the legislation when

we asked for it, perhaps there would have been some opportunity to have it dealt with before the House adjourns. As it is now, I think the opportunity for the public input and for the necessary debate about this will have to take place over the summer. I would hope people understand the importance of the bill and get involved in this particular bill. As I said before, there are some elements of it that have merit. Hopefully, we can find ways to revise the bill so we don't lose the merits of the bill but we protect the public interest.

I look forward to a very thorough airing as we move to the public debate. Hopefully the government can find some ways of satisfying the concerns that we in the opposition have on all three fronts. As I say, the most major concern I guess I've got is around all the financing for school and hospital capital, secondly the Ontario financing corporation and then the third concern is particularly with the realty corporation, that the public interest is not being served.

1620

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Hon Mr Cooke: Do we have two minutes?

The Acting Speaker: Yes.

Hon Mr Cooke: I appreciate the comments the member has made and I would actually certainly agree with him in terms of this being a major public policy which requires consideration and debate in the Legislature. No one disagrees with that at all, that this is a different way in some respects of doing business.

But what I don't agree with—and I just want to point out a couple of areas where I think he is wrong—is that there is no parallel between a schedule 4 agency and the Workers' Compensation Board. If you want to take a look at what a schedule 4 agency is and the controls that government has over a schedule 4 agency—human resource policy, policy directives, MOUs, those are just a few; of course appointment of the board—whereas the WCB is much more independent and the member knows that. But more important than those comments, I just want to point out a couple of the inconsistencies in the contribution this afternoon.

When the Liberals were in power, and appropriately so, the whole Homes Now program was funded through the Ontario Housing Corp. They took the loans out for the building of that housing, none of that capital showed on book and the member knows that. That was all done off book, and appropriately so. The only thing that showed in the expenditures under a Liberal budget was the cost of repayment of those loans over the 35 years for repayment. That's exactly the same way that we fund housing now and that was done through the Ontario Housing Corp and that's how the Homes Now program was funded. The member shakes his head but that is correct. That's how it was funded. In fact, the \$2 billion never showed up for the Homes Now program.

The sewer and water corporation was first proposed by Mr Nixon and the Liberal government, and in fact nobody was consulted. The municipal sector wasn't consulted; even the Ministry of Municipal Affairs wasn't consulted. Schools have been funded this way in the past in the 1960s and 1970s. The member knows it. Just be consistent with the position, for once, from the Liberals.

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): I just wanted to comment on how exceedingly thorough my colleague the member for Scarborough-Agincourt was.

In reference to the comments that were just made by the Minister of Education, while he's talking in reference to the member for Scarborough-Agincourt's remarks, and I think he's made a couple of comments with regard to his main speech, I think it's appropriate to just sum up because they're ideas that are in conflict.

Obviously, to be able to suggest that it's inappropriate, that somehow it's not proper to show those expenditures on the books, that somehow there's inconsistency in doing that, I think is entirely out of whack.

When we talk about costs, the costs of financing those expenditures will accumulate over time but none the less will always show up as a debt burden to the people of this province. After all, isn't that the bottom line? And what we're saying is—talk about being consistent—have the courage to demonstrate this very clearly. We weren't planning all of these capital corporations to the extent that you are.

I know there were plans around the Ontario sewers and clean water. Yes, we had some discussions with regard to doing that and bringing that forward, but I'll tell you something. There may have been problems with the proposals, and I quite frankly don't agree with taking things off-book, because it gets out of control. There's less accountability, not more. I don't see how you can suggest that in the final analysis there will be greater accountability. Impossible. We see the problems with the non-profit housing program that's being undertaken right now. It's less accountability, not greater accountability.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): To comment particularly on the member for Scarborough-Agincourt's comments on the realty corporation, I too am very troubled by the implications of this. The government, as the member has pointed out, took some \$350 million worth of assets off book to this agency and will transfer a further \$250 million.

The potential is certainly there that they could transfer buildings and do leasebacks. Let me tell you that the experience of companies that are in trouble is they will try to sell industrial buildings or office buildings that they own and do a leaseback. Very much the concern of people buying those leasebacks is the security that they will have, because they recognize that

the companies that are using this technique of financing are companies that have expended all of their other potential for borrowing.

I believe that this government is using this to be able to raise money, that it believes the electorate will not understand it is borrowing, but believe me, the bonding agencies will be looking at this and they will recognize what it's doing. I believe this is another technique, just like selling the GO trains and leasing them back, where they're fooling the public, but they're not fooling the people who look at the accounts of this government. I think it has serious long-term implications.

The other question that arises is, how will the properties being transferred to this agency from the government be valued? Will they be valued by arm's-length agencies or organizations that can determine whether this is a fair market value?

Mr Owens: I'd like to thank the member for Scarborough-Agincourt for his remarks. I want to state at the outset of this process that these crown corporations bear absolutely no identification with the Workers' Compensation Board. I'm not quite sure why the member from Scarborough-Agincourt wants to raise his government's record, and particularly his as the Minister of Labour with respect to WCB.

The member has asked a question around the advantage of the Ontario Financing Authority and how it will in fact lower the borrowing cost. Through the centralized management that will be done by the Ontario Financing Authority, this will in fact reduce the duplication of effort around the financing activities, which will result in lower borrowing costs.

The other advantage, and there are many, is that we'll look to broadening the capital base that is available to the province and broaden the investor base by offering a variety of instruments structured to meet some specialized investor demand.

In terms of an implied question, are we the only jurisdiction that is involved in this type of agency, I can tell the member for Scarborough-Agincourt, clearly not. There are a number of national and subnational financing authorities, including those in Sweden, Ireland and some Australian states.

I think in terms of the member in his former life in the private sector, he's quite familiar with downstream and upstream corporate organizations and how financing is done through the upstream corporation. We're simply trying to mirror a corporate process that is currently in practice across this country.

The Acting Speaker: This completes questions and/or comments. The honourable member for Scarborough-Agincourt has two minutes in response.

Mr Phillips: The reason I raised workers' compensation—I was the Minister of Labour. The Minister of

Education and Training said, "These organizations will have a memorandum of understanding." Of course they will. There's a memorandum of understanding between workers' compensation and the minister. Of course there'll be the memorandum of understanding, but what the memorandum of understanding says is that you keep your hands off it as the minister. So there are those memorandums of understanding.

The reason I raise it is because of my specific experience as the Minister of Labour and my concerns that when you set up independent, arm's-length agencies, they want to be independent, arm's-length agencies.

The Minister of Education also raised the Homes Now thing. He makes my point, and that is, yes, that's the way it's set up. Now we all realize, we see, that as they come on stream—the auditor made a big point in his audit. He says, "Listen, there's going to be \$1 billion"—I think he used the figure—"a year in costs." Right now it's about \$500 million, going to \$1 billion.

1630

Hon Mr Cooke: But you knew that.

Mr Phillips: The minister says we knew that. Specifically because of those experiences, I'm now raising those issues. Why do you want to set up a whole series of new areas that are just going to put debt on the books and raise annual cost? That's why I raise it.

There are other jurisdictions, as the member said. Yes, again, that's the reason I raise it. I've been reading the reports from Saskatchewan, British Columbia and other jurisdictions, where they're saying: "Listen, we've got to get the books of the government consolidated. We've got to stop hiving these things off and hiding debt. We've got to get the books of the province consolidated so the public can get a firm fix—the public, the elected officials, all of us—on the books."

It's for all of those reasons that I raise the issues, and the members have made my points for me.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): I'm pleased to participate in this debate on Bill 17, An Act to provide for the Capital Investment Plan of the Government of Ontario and for certain other matters related to financial administration.

This is an important bill and certainly requires a great deal of attention, not only by members of this House from all parties but certainly will, before we're finished, require the attention of those in the province who will have a direct need to call upon the services provided by this bill. Before I go too far in it, I'd like it to be known that our caucus will be looking for this bill to be referred to committee. We'd also like to have some public hearings to allow hospitals, schools, universities, municipalities and other agencies that have concerns that may be on their minds to have an opportunity to consider it further.

I see that as most important. Certainly, through the numbers of people in our caucus, we'll be able to make sure that happens.

There are good things in the bill and there are things that aren't so good. I think when you read the press releases of the government you're inclined to think it's just the perfect panacea to answer certain financial needs the province has, and it's a way of solving some of their very serious fiscal problem that they've not only created themselves but in some ways inherited from the previous Liberal government.

But the fact of the matter is, the government's trying to find ways out of the financial hole it helped create for itself when it got into this heavy deficit the Treasurer started to talk about: a \$17-billion deficit for 1993-94. It was at that time that the government realized it had to find ways out of this possible hole it was getting into and began to look for everything it could.

Some of those things, as we've said earlier in other debates and discussions—and our Conservative caucus has said that some of the things the government is trying to do certainly are worthwhile and are supportable by ourselves. Certainly our leader, Mr Harris, today in the Legislature made it clear that the efforts the government is trying to move on, or at least the intention of the social contract—there are certain benefits there that really have to be addressed and faced up to.

As painful as it is, it's something our caucus supports the intention of. Certainly we don't want to see people losing their jobs, but we've got to find ways of reducing the costs of the 90,000-and-some people who are part of the public service. That is one initiative, as painful as it is. Even in opposition, you have to stand up and be counted on those things that are a little bit more difficult to face up to.

The expenditure control plan is another example where the government tried to bring down the cost of doing business. Some of the things in the expenditure control plan are really very, very bad news to an awful lot of people: the fact that the government did not cut back on any of the fraud that exists in health care nor has touched on the fraud in social assistance.

Nor have they looked at some of the good-faith suggestions that have been brought forth through the social contract talks where there are billions more that can be saved in the expenditures of the province of Ontario. The government has not addressed them at all at this point in time, which means that in the future there are going to be ways in which the government can save more money.

It is our desire that we do everything we can to reduce the size of the deficit. The deficit for the province of Ontario has reached unparalleled proportions under this government and the previous Liberals. We as a society know that a deficit is just another word for

deferred taxes, deferred taxes on future generations. As long as we're spending beyond our means in Ontario today, it means that future generations are going to have to pay for the luxury and the happiness and the fine times we had. They're going to pay for our enjoyment of that.

That's not good. We should find ways of living within our means, of moving towards a balanced budget so that the province of Ontario becomes a place where its fiscal and monetary policies are sound and realistic and it is seen by outside investors as a place where you really want to do business. As all part of this large story that the government is now presenting, Bill 17 falls into it as one of the important mechanisms that's going to be used by the government for capital investment.

But if I may start my comments, just referring to the budget, which is really part of this glorious government policy—not so glorious; “inglorious” would be the proper way of describing it—you know, it's a way of cooking the books. Right at the very, very beginning, I have to say that when you look at the Ontario budget for 1993, where does it refer to the whole proposal under the capital investment plan and its startup moneys of \$800 million?

You find it not in the main context of the budget; you find it on page 19, under a double asterisk, where it's referred to on the page, as it says here, “Capital expenditure and debt adjusted to reflect new capital financing arrangements by \$0.8 billion in 1993-94, \$1.2 billion in 1994-95 and \$1.7 billion in 1995-96.” What they're doing as a government is removing \$0.8 billion this year, \$1.2 billion next fiscal year and \$1.7 billion in 1995-96.

It's a magical, sleight-of-hand approach. It's the shell game that this government is so notoriously known for of moving responsibility from one set of books, which is the government set of books, to another set of books, which will be that of this new capital investment plan.

You know, we're not allowed to call people crooked and liars and thieves and the things that they really are here in the Legislature, but at least we're able to point out that there are some major flaws in—I'm treading the line, aren't I, Mr Speaker?—the approach they're using, and I find it offensive.

I find it offensive when in fact they come out with a budget and say, “We're going to have the budgetary requirements”—in other words, a deficit—“of \$9.2 billion,” and they don't include the \$800 million they've now shoved aside under this new act. That's part of the failure of the government to establish credibility with me and people who are looking at its books.

I think it's all part of where the government has not got any set of standards that the outside world can really trust and rely upon. There are so many examples where the government will run up a debt and doesn't

reflect it on its own books. While I appreciate the need for a more rational treatment of capital expenditures, it is just as important that taxpayers have access to a clear, comprehensible and understandable set of books.

There's just a number of questions over the last few years about the appropriateness of some of the government's accounting practices. In 1990, for example, the Provincial Auditor reported that the use of preflows by the then Liberal government of the day can be viewed as an attempt to manage operating results and that the use of advance payments raises doubt concerning the integrity of the accounting process.

The auditor highlighted the mismanagement of the spending of the government of Ontario when Premier David Peterson was in power, when the present Liberal leader was part of the cabinet. They then were in a position where they were finding ways of cooking the books. They were doing it then, and more recently, the NDP government's use of pension plan deferrals and its inconsistent treatment of stabilization payments in the calculation of its revenues have reinforced the perception that the government manages and reports its accounts primarily to fit its political agenda, and only secondarily to provide a complete and accurate picture of the financial position of the province.

1640

As we see what this government's done with its pension plan deferrals and with its inconsistent treatment of stabilization payments, we can now look at these new crown corporations as just another way for the government to hide debt, but also to hide civil servants. These new crown corporations will be staffed by civil servants made redundant when the corporations assume the functions currently being performed in and by government ministries.

Thus, the government will take credit for reducing the size of the civil service but will not have taken one single person off the public payroll. I will be commenting on this further. This is going to be a chance to add to the public payroll, but the set of numbers that you're going to see presented by Mr Rae and his government when they come up to the public for re-election is not going to reflect accurately or honestly what they've done in the creation of these new agencies.

The public has a right to be assured that these new crown corporations are going to be something more than just another accounting fiddle. They want to know that what the government is doing does honestly reflect what it is really doing, and if you end up having a problem—you're paying out more or the debt is more or there are more civil servants—let's at least deal honestly with the truth of it all.

I'm a great believer that 50% of the way to a solution is when you've defined the problem, and so often in politics we will define the problem in a very narrow sense. We respond to the interest groups, we respond to

particular people who have a vested interest in something, instead of having the whole picture, and the picture is something that is an honest reflection of actually what is going on.

Maybe the problem is that the government doesn't know what's going on. The government hasn't got a feel for so many things that are there. Even a short time ago, the government didn't know how much land it owned or controlled under Government Services. The government really didn't know what computer systems and services it had inside the government and where they were and what they were doing.

There are so many examples. The government has such a large organization, the people of Ontario don't understand, with over 90,000 people who make up the civil service and bureaucracy of the Ontario government, just how huge this operation is, and when you look at the total public service that goes into the schools and the municipalities and the hospitals and the crown agencies and Ontario Hydro, there are well over 900,000 people here in the province of Ontario who make up this public service. It's one large, large organization.

Now what we're doing in the introduction of this bill is complicating it, and we're adding, I think, problems as we try to find solutions to certain other problems.

Part of the solution we're looking for is to find a way of dealing with capital investment so that the entire capital that the government puts out to a school board, hospital or some agency can be amortized over a period of time, and therefore that money, instead of coming off the books in one big removal and one big transfer, will be spread out over a longer period of time, and through the mechanisms that are included in this bill, there will be ways in which the government recovers that money.

I can see why the government wants, under the financial pressures of 1993, to do something about its capital. But then when I start seeing how they are going about it with this bill—the bureaucracy that's going to be created, the magic that is going into it which is part of the sleight of hand and the shell game that the government is so notorious for—I have to stop and ask many questions. Those questions will best be answered in committee when we get there.

I was disappointed yesterday. I've been pleased till now that the spirit of cooperation from the Treasurer personally has been such that I see him as someone who wants to be fairminded. We did not receive a briefing from ministerial staff till yesterday morning. The meeting was set, partly at my convenience, at 9:30, before caucus, and I was caught in traffic getting here, but the meeting ended very shortly after 10 o'clock and the questions that we had were far from answered in the briefing. So I'm somewhat embarrassed, having had more questions, that the government was not prepared to give us more time to deal with those questions.

Mr Owens: That's really totally unfair, Don.

Mr Cousens: I'm making the statement here in the Legislature that if we're going to deal with major pieces of legislation—and the parliamentary assistant says that I'm being unfair. To me, it's unfair that you as a government don't give us a chance to understand the details of things. If you're going to start interrupting and copping out right now, it's not the way to do it. I'm telling you that we have a right to know and you're not letting that right be passed on. So don't come along and interrupt. You weren't there. You don't know. You probably haven't even read the bill.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Order.

Mr Cousens: So you come along—Mr Speaker, he keeps on carping away. He doesn't accept the responsibility for it. We in the opposition are dealing with the bill and they're coming along and saying, "You're not being fair." I'm saying they're not being fair. We have a bill to deal with that's mighty important, and you come out and say, "Oh, well, you're not being fair." The responsibility of the opposition is to provide honest—

Mr Owens: You were making personal attacks. You were.

Mr Cousens: He never shuts up, Mr Speaker. Is he one of yours or is he going to be part of the audience and just participate when he has his two minutes at the end? If he's going to continue to interrupt, I ask you to cause him to be censored.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): Have a drink of water, Don.

Mr Cousens: I'll have a drink of water, but I'm getting sick of the constant interruptions from the parliamentary assistant, who doesn't know what he's talking about.

I'm saying we in the opposition have the right to understand in detail what the bill is all about. I'm saying we did not have that full right. We had an opportunity for a partial introduction to the bill. Our questions were not all answered. I say it's another reason why I'm going to force this bill for public hearings. There are a lot of other reasons for it as well.

Mr Owens: You don't need to force it.

Mr Cousens: I'm telling you, Mr Speaker—I make this plea to you. If the honourable parliamentary assistant is going to continue to make his comments and interjections, I would ask you, as the Speaker, to exercise the authority that's given to you. Certainly, in the last day or so, the Speaker has been especially mean-minded, in my view, to the member from Etobicoke and other members of our caucus.

If you think I'm going to stand here and allow them

to have privileges that were taken away from us yesterday in this Legislature when we couldn't talk on the budget, we couldn't make positions known in this House because the government ruled us out of order, the Speaker ruled us out of order, Mr Speaker, I'm calling upon you to do your job with the carpers, the seals or the fish over there that need to be fed.

There are a number of issues on the bill that really have to be analysed and understood. It has to do with what the government has called its new capital financing plan to transfer payments to what it calls USH: universities, school boards and hospitals. That is going to take some time to understand.

I think we want to understand more fully the cost to the province in assuming hundreds of millions annually in new contingent liabilities, and I'd like to see that addressed in greater detail.

I think, as well, we need to understand the costs and benefits of turning the management of the province's borrowing plan over to a schedule 4 crown agency, and I will talk about that further. Then I would like to know how this government is going to attract more joint venture partners in the private sector.

There is a philosophy of government here which you never have defined except before the government was elected. At that time, Mr Rae and the socialist—capitalist, socialist, whatever, came into this government—

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): Zealots.

1650

Mr Cousens: Yes, they're zealots for sure. As they came into this government they had An Agenda for People. I haven't seen them define a true mission statement that begins to tell the people of Ontario in a few words what the true mission statement of Ontario is going to be, because the government is confusing so many things with its plethora of programs, social and otherwise, that confuse the public from really understanding and knowing what the thrust of the government is going to be.

Well-intentioned good words are not sufficient. What we really want to understand is the programs and what it is those programs are going to accomplish. Instead of our having a sense that those programs are going to be truly as successful and as proactive and as useful as we would hope, the fact is that these programs are laid out, we see terms of reference defined in Bill 17, we see the new guidelines for what the bill is all about, but having seen those, there is a sense in which we are not able to believe all it is that we're reading.

I see the government systematically doing a number of things: moving staff out of the bureaucracy of the civil service into its new crown agencies; I see the government moving its debt from its own books and the

fiscal policy of the province of Ontario to another set of books; I see the government pushing off the debenture and the other responsibilities to another agency; I see the government changing its whole concept of what grants are to a new concept of loans; I see the government giving a program for the future without really making it very clear.

What I'd like to do is touch upon the bill specifically as we go through it.

Mr Owens: Come on, Gerry, don't leave.

Mr Cousens: I find it offensive that the honourable parliamentary assistant—I can guarantee you, Mr Speaker, if you're not going to deal with Mr Owens and his ignorant comments in this House, then I wish that either there were a new Speaker or that someone else is going to do something about it.

Mr Owens: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I was not addressing the member for Markham, nor was I even thinking about the member for Markham. I was simply addressing the critic for the Liberal Party. I think the member for Markham should keep his comments germane to the legislation that's under discussion and apologize.

Mr Runciman: Baloney. No apology necessary.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Markham has the floor.

Mr Cousens: We're dealing with a bill that has four parts to it. We're going to talk about those four parts and the impact they have.

The one part has to do with the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp, the Ontario Clean Water Agency, the Ontario Realty Corp and the Ontario Financing Authority. As I've gone through this bill, I have to say that there are many, many concerns. I accept the fact that the government wants to find a way of removing something from the books so that they look better as they're running the province now, but for them to come along and shove all those costs into another agency, a crown corporation, is reminiscent of creating another Ontario Hydro, if you really want to say.

What we have with Ontario Hydro is an example of what we don't want to see any more of. I mean, Ontario Hydro, when it started out and probably if you look at it, still continues to provide—

Mr Owens: You set it up, Don.

Mr Cousens: I wish the honourable member, who is ignorant and stupid for the way he is continuing to interrupt—and I ask that if the Speaker's not doing anything about it, I'm saying you should do something to name him.

The Acting Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr Cousens: You're not being fair in this House. You're allowing him to continue his ignorant comments.

Mr Runciman: Identify him.

Mr Cousens: I'm really saying, member for—Mr Owens, whatever he is, if he's supposed to be a member of the House, he's not being very fair when we've got other things to do.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Please be seated. The honourable member for Yorkview on a point of order.

Mr Cousens: Ontario Hydro has a number of long-term debts.

Mr Mammoliti: Mr Speaker, on a point of order.

The Acting Speaker: I ask the member for Markham to please be seated.

Mr Cousens: The Ontario Hydro yearbook—

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): There's a point of order, Don.

Mr Cousens: —which is at \$34 billion—

The Acting Speaker: Please be seated. The honourable member for Yorkview on a point of order.

Mr Mammoliti: I heard the word "stupid." He called another member of this Legislature stupid. I'd ask whether or not this is parliamentary and I'd ask him to withdraw that word, Mr Speaker.

Mr Marchese: Even Chris says that.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Markham has the floor.

Mr Cousens: Mr Speaker, the people who are watching have no idea how offensive it is, that when you're elected to represent a riding—

Mr Runciman: Constant harassment.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Please be seated. Obviously what's been happening over the last few minutes is that there have been a lot of interjections on either side of the chamber and some inflammatory comments from both sides of the chamber. I would advise all the members of the House that interjections are totally out of order. The honourable member for Markham has the floor and I wish he would continue to debate the bill.

Mr Cousens: Thank you, Mr Speaker, but I can say there has not been one interjection from this side of the House for the last several minutes. I really appreciate the fact that there will be some order here. It makes it extremely difficult when you're elected to serve your people—as painful as it is to deal with bills like this that are very complex, have far-reaching affects to them—and then you have a constant interruption coming from other members of the House who do not give the patience or time for members to have their say.

You think it's easy? I'm saying it isn't easy. I want very much to have the opportunity to respond to this bill. It's part of my role as the critic for Finance in the Ontario PC caucus. I can tell you that I listened without interruption to the Liberal speaker when he was speaking. I felt sorry for him, as well, at the number of

interruptions that were coming from members opposite. So all I can say is that we're dealing with certain times when it can be all right, in question period, but when you're dealing with this kind of activity, I just think there is a sense of offence that is going on.

I have to say that what we are seeing in the creation of Bill 17, with the new Capital Investment Plan Act, is a series of crown agencies which in the future have the potential of becoming more Ontario Hydros and you have the administration, you have the number of employees, you have the total size of this large corporation that results. Though this is going to be a capital investment act, where you're dealing with capital that's flowing out of the province into this agency—but, you know, you look at the debt load of Ontario Hydro, with its \$34 billion, and add that to some of the other agencies that we've got around the province of Ontario, it makes you stop and wonder why it is that we in the province are divesting responsibility that should be within the government under the ministries to crown corporations, a step removed from the legislative process, a step removed from the scrutiny of the House, so that they can operate somewhat more independently and outside the purview of this place. That touches on the responsibility of the Legislature for what goes on in the province of Ontario, and what we're doing constantly is eroding those powers and taking them away from the legislators and moving them into small subsections or crown corporations, away from that observation.

Even though this crown corporation will be subject to the Provincial Auditor's review, and that is good and I learned that through the presentation that we had earlier this week, it still is another set of books. It's another set of people, it's another set of bureaucracy, it's another set with the senior management and the others coming down to run it. It's removed from this Legislature. In fact, who's going to be running the province of Ontario pretty soon but these crown corporations and these agencies? Ontario Hydro is an example of such a crown corporation that has grown so large that it's even bigger than the Ministry of Environment and Energy, under which it falls. The problems we end up having with that is, does the tail wag the dog?

1700

Now we're looking at the power that exists within the chair of Ontario Hydro and within the power structure of Ontario Hydro versus that of the province of Ontario. One wonders who is in control of what. Now what we're doing in the creation of these four crown corporations is, we are again moving away from the province to other agencies that power, that authority, that control, and that has to cause pause for reflection and understanding as to what impact that really has on the province of Ontario. I believe it could be good if you trusted them and they were going to be perfect all the time, but that just isn't the way human beings are when

we're running business, when we're running anything. It needs to have that constant checking out, checking through, making sure that they're on the correct course.

The legislation, and we will go through it shortly, shows the powers that will fall within these different agencies, which are extensive and dangerous and far-reaching. We in opposition are expected to just come along and accept it blindly, in good faith and as if we believe all the promotional things that surround us. I will not and do not and cannot. I say, as we start off the discussion on this, that any efforts that this government has to take the power away from members of the Legislature, whose powers virtually have been largely removed over the last number of years anyway—certainly, our role in the Legislature.

As you see, with the powers that the government has taken with the Interim Waste Authority, through Bill 143, it is another example of where the government has created another bureaucracy outside itself. The Interim Waste Authority then is responsible for the garbage in York, Durham, Peel and Metropolitan Toronto. This is an agency that reports through to the Minister of Environment.

Every time we asked the Minister of Environment a question about it, the Minister of Environment was able to say, "Oh well, that's not my—I don't know. It's being looked after by the Interim Waste Authority," whereas, if it were under the minister's own ministry, she would be more accountable, even although the Ministry of Environment is the major and only shareholder of it.

What we see happening is it becomes an excuse for a government to say, "It's not our problem." I've seen that in spades with the Interim Waste Authority, where this government used that as a way to solve—and they haven't solved it; they've created more problems for themselves and for the people of the greater Toronto area in the way they've tried to handle the whole problem of the disposal of waste within the greater Toronto area.

I do not trust crown corporations that are established by the government which then report through to the ministry. I have seen what happened with the IWA reporting through to the Ministry of Environment and I see that as a total failure on the part of the government. I see it as a copout of the government. I see it as a way for the government to accomplish its devious objectives without having to accept accountability and responsibility for it. We have not been able to make this government accountable for them here in this Legislature.

What we see now being formed is a whole series of other agencies outside of the government. I mean, why even sit, why even be elected, why even come here if it's all going to be handled by civil servants, bureaucrats, who often do a very good job but are none the less outside of the responsible overview and oversight

of this House? That is a problem and it's not being faced up to.

The public at large has no understanding of what happens when you have these crown agencies formed, how they get started and then they get bigger and bigger and bigger. You see that as you understand how the boards of directors can be formed, all the opportunity to expand and build upon them. Each of these different corporations can have, by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the appointment of up to 12 members of their board. Those members of the board will not be unlike the members we have in Ontario Hydro now, political appointments, a good way for Bob Rae or the government in power to appoint friends to an office and responsibility, to pay them off for what they were doing.

The wheels of government—here we sit. There's not a thing we can do about the patronage appointments, not a thing, because the government maintains and holds that right. We've seen it done at every level and we've got to clean up that process. But no, when Bob Rae said he'd do something about it, he set up a committee. I was talking to Mrs Marland today about the committee as it was investigating—investigating?—reviewing some of the applications for new appointments. There's nothing you can do. She just said it's a frustrating experience. We're going to have more frustration because the government, through the Lieutenant Governor, will be able to appoint whoever the government's friends are to these positions of responsibility.

I'm saying that's why people no longer have a sense of confidence about government, because we build these kingdoms around ourselves. We've got to clean up that process. This bill further perpetuates the kind of worries and concerns the public has as a whole about the way in which government operates without listening, understanding or knowing what people really think.

When I talk about this bill being an expansion of government without accountability, I know what I'm talking about, because I've seen it in spades with the Interim Waste Authority. Then when you see the kind of terrible things that are coming out of the Interim Waste Authority where they rule out certain options because of political decisions, they make political decisions rather than technical decisions. If they were really going to do it right, they would at least open up options for consideration, but not so. They won't look at rail haul, they won't look at incineration, they wouldn't look at other sites. They made the decisions; they live by it. Well, we fall by it, and the result is the province of Ontario is not better served.

I say, I plead with the government, be careful when you're setting up these agencies as just another way of doing your job. The job is something that should be fulfilment of each minister and their ministry, and through that ministry being able to maintain it, to

monitor it and to build upon it—but not so.

I have to say that one of the concerns that comes to me on the bill is a shift in the way in which this government will deal with grants to schools, universities and hospitals. It's going to take just a moment, but I want to tie in, on page 12 of the bill, section 33, and there are three subsections to section 33 of the bill.

It says in subsection 33(1):

"A payment for capital purposes, made by the Minister of Education and Training to a school board, that is charged to an appropriation of the Ministry of Education and Training made for the fiscal year commencing on the 1st day of April, 1993, shall be deemed to have been a loan from the province to the school board if the payment was made in respect of one of the following:

"1. A project approved under the capital grant plan, 1979.

"2. An obligation incurred under an agreement entered into between the Minister of Education and Training or a predecessor of the minister and a school board....

"3. The Jobs Ontario program established in the 1992 Ontario budget."

What I want to make clear is the parts that I underlined in my bill, "A payment for capital purposes, made by the Minister of Education and Training, that is charged..." is "deemed to have been a loan from the province to the school board." Now, that is the same line that appears under the universities, "...a payment for capital purposes made through the capital support program of the Ministry of Education and Training to a university"—and it mentions a few in specific—"shall be deemed to have been a loan from the province."

And the section under health care, where it also makes the same distinction, says that,

"Except for capital projects where the Minister of Health's share is less than or equal to \$1,000,000, a payment for capital purposes made by the Minister of Health to a hospital...shall be deemed to have been a loan from the province to the hospital or other facility."

I want to just talk and for us to think about what that means. I'll give you an example on a school board. I was chairman of the York Region Board of Education for a time and trustee for some eight years, and we looked forward each year to the capital allocations that would come from the province that would help us, in a very fast-growing board, to provide the schools and the facilities and the upgrades to our facilities for this increasingly large population, and that became part of the cost.

We would have to debenture part of the cost ourselves, which would be a long-term loan for the ratepayers of York region, and the other part would be a capital infusion from the province of Ontario to help

pay for the program. First of all, we received approval from the province, and then it would provide a capital grant to assist us in building those schools—a capital grant, an unforgivable gift that would come to help us provide for those facilities.

1710

An example in hospitals has to do with the Markham-Stouffville Hospital. In 1985, when I was in cabinet, we were very fortunate that one of the last items to be approved was the Markham-Stouffville Hospital. The Markham-Stouffville Hospital, which is now constructed—it's one of those things where, with all due credit to the Honourable Elinor Caplan, at the time the Liberal Minister of Health, she continued to fulfil the dream of our community and the commitment of a previous government to see that the Markham-Stouffville Hospital would proceed.

The hospital cost some \$60 million. We raised some 20% of that from within the community, one of the largest fund-raising activities of the community, but then a large part of that—I forget the exact number but it was in the order of 60% to 80%; I think it was 60% of the capital—came directly from the province as an unforgivable gift. It was a capital grant that allowed us to build that hospital; a grant, not a loan.

Now what we're seeing this bill do is that effective April 1, 1993, which is April Fool's, somewhat retroactive to when the bill was brought in, any future bequests or moneys—it's best to say it's moneys—that are handed out to hospitals, universities or school boards are going to be treated as loans. So, therefore, the lump sum will go to that jurisdiction, that board, and then it will have a period of time, like 20 years, to pay it back through to the crown corporation. It is no longer a gift. In other words, the promises that have been passed out before—

Hon Mr Cooke: You are misunderstanding.

Mr Cousens: In that case, they should have given us more time to understand it. If that is the case, then I look forward to clarification and review, because if you're able, as minister, to say that you're not converting, that what are intended as grants are now going to be—they're not repayable. In the past they have been not repayable.

Hon Mr Cooke: They'll get the money to repay the loan from us, just as the debentures were done in the 1960s and 1970s.

Mr Cousens: The money will come back from the government to pay that back?

Hon Mr Cooke: Just as it was done back in the 1960s and 1970s.

Mr Cousens: If that is the case, then the bill itself should reflect the way in which that is going to be done. That is the kind of thing that needs to be clearly defined.

What I'm most concerned about is that the province is again downloading financial responsibility from the province to other jurisdictions and causing them to pay the bill. Indeed, the reserves that some of those municipalities have, the credit rating that those municipalities and jurisdictions have, is greater than the province's. Indeed, the crown corporation that's going to be loaning the money out can get it at a lower interest than others. But I want to be absolutely sure that this is not another example of the government downloading financial obligations from the province, which heretofore were paid for by the province, to local jurisdictions: hospitals, universities and school boards. I see that as an issue.

The minister in his comment, as we were interchanging here, indicates that I have not got that correct, and if that is true, he will take away one of the concerns that I have about this bill, because I certainly will not tolerate, the public will not tolerate, a continuing downloading of financial responsibility from the province to local levels of government. What happens then is that they just have to pay it out longer and longer. I think the public are at a point now where they're saying, "We can't do it any more." They just can't handle it.

What is happening is that the bill, I think, is now giving more power to school boards to borrow money. I'm worried about that, because every effort that we can have to keep every level of government within its budgetary guidelines of not running a deficit during its term and during a fiscal year should be made. We should not be allowing governments at any level to incur future debt, future taxes. We should do everything we can to live within our means, except for, of course, capital expenditures.

I see on page 28 of the bill another very suspicious part of the bill which will now allow school boards to incur debt into the future, which again is a worrisome thing.

I know in our own jurisdiction in York region, the Roman Catholic separate school board received a bonus of some \$12 million from the province recently to help pay off its debt that's been accumulating. But we're dealing with a board that even this year alone will have an \$8-million deficit. They're providing a program of excellence to the young people in York region, but they're still going beyond what they are able to bring in in taxes to pay for it. The bill here is in the complicated jargon that is part of every bill, but as I understand it, a school board will be able to go out and borrow money far more easily than before. That worries me, because I think that in the past the restriction of being able to do that was a good restriction.

We're seeing legislation come in which will change the way in which—through the Ontario Financing Authority, the relationships between all those agencies, the three new crown corporations, the one for water, the

one for transportation and the realty corporation, they are going to have a relationship now through to the Ontario Financing Authority to get money. I just want to be very certain how those relationships are and that it is not in any way going to cause a downloading of responsibility and taxpayer load to local ratepayers from the province.

We saw so much of that during the Liberal regime. The Liberals did it in a tremendously powerful way where they provided far more services at the local level and never gave a cent to pay for them. You saw that certainly, and I did. When you saw double-digit increases in local taxes during the 1980s, during the time the Liberals were in power, it had an awful lot to do with those functions and services that they forced upon municipalities, which with no money coming in, those municipalities had to provide for. If this bill is a perpetuation of that concept, then it's going to be fought with everything we have.

As we look at the different parts of the bill, the different corporations that have been formed and will make it up, I'd like to comment briefly on the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp. Tremendous powers will now reside outside of government. I commented earlier on the way in which we as legislators are giving up powers and responsibilities to other agencies and groups, but if you start looking at the powers of the transportation capital corporation, they go on to say that it can make agreements for planning, design, finance and construction, improvement operations, to build highways, public transportation projects or other transportation projects. In other words, the very people who are doing it now in the Ministry of Transportation will probably be moved over there.

They'll have the right to expropriate and use any land. How confusing it is anyway for people who own land in Canada. We unfortunately don't have anything within the Constitution that protects people from having their land attacked or taken away from them. Again, you have another agency, not unlike what Bill 143 did with the Interim Waste Authority, which gave the Interim Waste Authority the power to expropriate land whenever it wanted to. This act again has that power where the transportation capital corporation is concerned.

The other thing is the powers that will exist under the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp. This is probably the only place that people will have a chance to debate whether or not they are in favour of tolls. It gives them the right to establish and collect tolls for the operation of any vehicle or class of vehicle on a toll highway. I don't think we've had the debate on toll highways yet, toll roads, toll bridges, the way in which the government has announced that we'll be paying for future transportation corridors and infrastructure.

I know the public is prepared to buy into that one if

we know that's the only way it can be done. Although the jury isn't in on it, I would hope that through the debate of this bill, through the discussion in public hearings, there will be an opportunity for the government to present how it is going to proceed with its toll roads and highways and toll system, so that the public has a chance to deal with something more substantive in the discussion than a few press releases from the Minister of Transportation.

1720

I'm concerned with what tolls are going to be about. It says here, "A highway that has been designated as a toll highway continues to be a highway for all purposes of law even if it is operated under an agreement with the corporation." I guess what it really means now is that Highway 407, when it's built—if it's ever built in my lifetime—will come under this corporation.

Then it goes on to describe how the tolls are going to be handled, what kind of vehicles will be going, how you can prepay it, the notice of failure, the setting of rules around it. If you're going to have tolls—and it seems the government is going to have that; that is necessary. It also explains in the bill, in section 45, how reciprocal arrangements can be entered into with other governments in Canada and the United States to collect from people who have used the toll roads and didn't pay for them.

People, up to now, have been generally in favour of tolls as a way of building new infrastructures and highways and systems. But then, as I was reading through the bill, I've come across a section which I find totally repulsive and unacceptable. It falls into some of the powers that will lie within the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp. I will read it into the record. It says, in section 47, "Subject to the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the corporation may make regulations designating any highway as a toll highway."

There is nothing in this bill that prevents the government from making Highway 401 a toll highway, or from making Highway 400 a toll highway, or 427 or any other 400 road in Ontario a toll road.

Until now, the press clippings and the releases that have been given out on toll roads have all referred to new construction and new highways. People like myself were saying, "If that's the only way we can get 407, I'm prepared to buy into it." But now, when I read the bill and the bill says specifically that the government has the right to make any highway a toll road, that is not the power I want to see given to this transportation authority. You're then giving them a blank cheque.

Already the money that's taken in by the province of Ontario through our taxes, but especially taxes on petroleum products to drive our vehicles, is so high—it no longer just goes to pay for the roads. The money that's taxed for us on gasoline and petroleum products far exceeds what goes into road construction; far

exceeds it. When it came out, it was a tax that was supposed to be used for the construction of roads. Now what we see instead is the government seizing this opportunity to put a toll on any or every road in the province of Ontario.

I don't think I or people in this province have any trust of any government to have that kind of power without some really good debate, especially when it's going to be in the hands of a crown agency that isn't even reportable and accountable to the Legislature. Mind you, that agency is going to have on it the Deputy Minister of Transportation. It'll have a number of political appointments of the government. But they can do what they want with abandon. We in Ontario pay the bill and we're seeing the cost of all those bills now by being one of the most heavily taxed jurisdictions in the world. We are the most heavily taxed in Canada and we're the most heavily taxed in North America.

Now, here it gives power to the government to levy more taxes. You just have to stop and think about giving that power to a crown corporation that isn't even accountable to the Legislature. "Subject to the approval of the Lieutenant Governor, the corporation may make regulations designating any highway as a toll highway."

I could go on on that one and I won't, because there's much more to the bill to be discussed, debated and reviewed. But how heinous, how sick, how grabby, how consistent that this government would come along and slip something like that into the middle of the bill, and certainly not referenced anywhere else.

"No. We're going to collect tolls to pay for our new highways." Sure, I can see having to put a toll on Highway 407. We need 407. We need it badly and we're prepared to pay for it. I think we've paid for it already through our gas and through our taxes, but here again people on the 401 or another highway can face additional levies because of that.

And then the whole business of the way in which the law is now being interpreted—I'm concerned about who is accountable for driving a car. This House has not yet debated a piece of legislation. That, to me, is again reprehensible, repulsive, repugnant and one that should not be brought forward, and it is. They're looking at a way in which they can have drivers fined for speeding using electronic or photographic means so that if you go through one of their new electronic photographic speed traps, you'll receive in the mail a picture of your car and receive your ticket for speeding or for some other infraction.

I personally have great problems with that kind of technology being used to ticket people. I mean, who is it that used the car? Was it a rental car? Was it someone who was borrowing the car? And yet it's the owner of the car who has the chance of losing points, losing his licence, being suspended when in fact the driver could have been someone else on a joyride. There are

so many questions that have not been addressed in this kind of technology being used to levy another ticket on someone.

Now what we see in this bill are special powers being given to this transportation authority to come along and use photographic and electronic evidence in respect of the non-payment of tolls. If I had some trust in the bureaucracy in the government system to know that if someone is going to be worthy of being caught—and let's make sure we do it to them and that we do it when they're guilty—that would be fine.

But when I see it as a generic new guideline that says, "Anyone who is on these toll roads is now going to be subjected to photographic and electronic evidence in respect to non-payment of tolls," and then they could lose their licence, they could lose the ability to drive because of the nonsensical way in which the bureaucracy in the Attorney General's department works in this province. Is it any wonder that people worry about having another way of a ticket being levied upon them?

This gives power to this agency to cause people to lose their livelihood, to lose their business, to lose the ability to drive, especially if the wrong person gets the ticket. If the person who owns the vehicle gets all the tickets and they weren't driving their vehicle at the time, they are the ones who have their licence suspended. They'll have their rights removed.

It's the kinds of powers that are moving away from the Ministry of Transportation; they're moving away from the Solicitor General and the Attorney General; they're moving out to a crown corporation, and then what do you do about it? We've given them carte blanche to do what they want.

It touches a nerve. It touches a nerve and it says: "Do we want to see everything in the province of Ontario looked after by a third party? Do I want to have someone from another agency responsible for everything or is there any benefit to having the government accountable for those actions?"

So if you end up having people who are falsely charged, wrongly charged, being ticketed, is there anything that we can do in the Legislature? The answer will be—and I can just see it now, the Minister of Transportation saying, "Well that's not in my purview any more; that's under the transportation authority," and you just have no way of raising it. It's a provincial road paved with provincial money, used by provincial citizens, and yet the provincial government has a hands-off policy that says it doesn't touch it any more.

That's not the way it was meant to be and it's not the way that government should function. What you've done now is just move it further and further into a bureaucracy so that the decisions that are being made are coming from people who have no accountability to the public at large, to the Legislature, to this, the House,

where all decisions should be accountable when it has to do with provincial money and provincial decisions.

1730

So when I look at the transportation authority, I started off by being somewhat open-minded to the use of toll roads if that was a way of getting the important road that we're looking for in our community; and I'm sure there are other communities across the province that have the same interest in having improvements in roads, and transportation networks improved.

It may not just be roads. If we're going to get smart, we're going to have to use our rail lines more effectively so that we've got the services there to move people quickly from city to city and from opportunity that they need for work or employment or social or tourism.

We know the need to continue to invest in the infrastructure that is Ontario, and we know that there is a share of that cost that can be regained through tolls. We know that there should be a time when those toll roads should come off. I mean, we saw it on the Burlington Skyway. How many times did they pay for the Skyway through the tolls that were on there?

Certainly as we have to pay the piper, we're prepared to see those costs recovered. But I just don't want to see it go in perpetuity, and if there is some way in which we can put limits on what the government is going to do—limits to control it, limits of common sense—then the place to maintain and keep them is within the Ministry of Transportation, not in another new agency.

In fact, that really comes up with one of the flaws of this bill. Instead of creating four new agencies, if you want as a government to find new ways of borrowing money and if you want to change the way in which you're having a relationship with universities, schools, hospitals and other agencies, there are other ways you can do it. You don't have to bring in such an omnibus, powerful bill that goes and puts the power into new special agencies.

You could do that within the existing structure and accomplish some of the financial objectives that you want to do. The only thing you'd have to do at that time is come clean as a government, open up the books and be accountable and honest about it. What this is is a method to move information from government books to other places.

Well, the transportation authority—I know we're going to see it come into play in Ontario. The Ontario Transportation Capital Corp will be a reality very soon. I sincerely hope that through the public discussions on this we are able to limit the powers of that transportation authority. I can assure you that I will be bringing forward amendments that would hopefully change the powers that this corporation would have on what is going to be a toll highway and on how the tolls are going to be levied and for how long. I would like to be

absolutely sure that the moneys that are gained through the tolls are invested back into the infrastructure. When you've done that job, wouldn't that be a way of just cutting bait on it and saying it's over?

There have been so many times when we in this province have tried to say to the government, "If you're going to go and collect the tax on tires, the \$5 tire tax, use it to find environmental ways to recycle those tires." So the government collected over \$200 million in the tire tax, and how much of that money ever went into recycling efforts for tires? Around \$20 million or \$30 million. I'm not sure because we can't find the numbers. Certainly, little more than 10% of it went into the whole effort of finding new technology to use tires.

If we could have a sense that the fishing licence you pay for went into the creation of new supplies of fish to replenish the streams and lakes and waterways of Ontario, then people who fish would have a sense that that fishing licence had a purpose and that it was worth something. But instead it goes into the general treasury, and the government, in its lack of wisdom, has cut back in the fish hatcheries and has cut back in the replenishment of supplies of fish into the waterways of Ontario.

A major tourism industry for Ontario, fresh fish and the whole industry that it provides for in attracting people out to enjoy nature and to enjoy Ontario from other jurisdictions, here in Ontario, what we've done is, we levy a tax, we take the money, we put it in the general treasury, and the money doesn't go back into specific funds that can help replenish and rebuild those supplies.

I'm saying the same thing is true of the toll highway. If the toll highway is going to work, then some way, keep the bookkeeping separate so that the books will say, "All right, now you've got 407 paid for or now you've got the Burlington Skyway paid for, the tolls come off." Don't just use it as another way of collecting more money and more money and more money into these bottomless coffers of the Ontario government.

We could talk further on that one, but I want to touch on the clean water agency. I think, generally speaking, the public at large would say that a clean water agency is needed. In fact, it was promised by the Liberals when they were in power. They had set up the beginnings of an agency and never knew what to do with it, didn't know how to get it off the ground. So it has moved from being a fairly high priority to almost being a no priority. In four years, we have done little or anything to establish an agency in the province of Ontario that can begin to build the sewage plants that we need, a way to make sure those plants are cleaning the water that goes out.

The infrastructure problems that we have in the greater Toronto area—I think you're going to see it across the province in any of the older communities where the town sewer systems are rapidly deteriorating.

There's a major reconstruction required. It's been some time since I had a presentation by the watermain association, when it was talking about the need for improving the whole sewer system in Toronto.

They were saying it's in the order of \$6 billion to \$7 billion to just rebuild that infrastructure that people don't see and take for granted. You flush or you put something down the sink and you just assume it's going to go to the right place. That whole system is now falling apart underneath our feet as we speak. So to have an agency that will be in a position to help communities rebuild that infrastructure is important.

It's like a community that I used to represent in Richmond Hill. We had a very successful program when Mr Brandt was the Minister of the Environment. We received very valuable grants that protected Wilcox Lake community in Oak Ridges. We had bubbling up in the ground and there was just a terrible destruction of the environment. The lake was becoming contaminated. People really didn't have any way of dealing with the water. Land was around it, all quite soft and soggy, because the flushings and the refuse had no place to go.

We were able to put in a sewer system and it's a miracle what it's done to that community. It has just made that community come alive. You've seen new development, new growth. The lake is now pristine and clear, as much as one can hope for, and it's moving in the right direction. We as a community benefited by it.

Other communities that have worries about their water supply have to have a sense of knowing that this agency will be in a position to help them address the contamination concerns that they would have.

Then I come along and I start to look at the powers that will exist within government in setting up this agency. I sincerely hope that it has no hopes of doing anything with our water, in trading it off to another jurisdiction. Certainly that's a federal matter, but it talks about the agreements that they have to make. I would certainly hope that there is no way in which we are going to start taking very casually the movement of water from one community to the other. I'm beginning to hear the way in which people are trying to move waters that are in the Great Lakes system to other communities. I'm just saying, water is one of our most valuable resources and we as legislators want to do everything we can to protect it.

Mind you, I'm worried that we set up another jurisdiction to run that for us, but we as legislators have to do everything possible to keep our waterways clean, to provide good drinking water. It's something we take for granted, but it only happens when you've got the whole system being looked after.

1740

I'm worried when I start looking at the powers of the government on this. I look again at the powers they

have. It's further relinquishment of powers from the Legislature, from the Minister of Environment, under whom this would fall, to another agency, and as that agency is able to make its decisions, we as legislators will be one step further removed from having any impact on it.

I looked at the powers they have. They "may make regulations prescribing methods of calculating charges that are additional to the amounts payable by a municipality under an agreement under this act." It's another way of collecting taxes on your water.

They're going to have the power to levy bills on the people of Ontario outside of the powers of a municipality. Do the people who elect their local governments want the province of Ontario to again intrude into local government decision-making by having extra powers to interfere in what's going on there?

One thing is to make sure that we do the job, but the other is the way in which the government is going to recover the cost for that. The agency may make regulations with regard to the operation of all these things, but also the collecting of money for them.

Let's stop and understand whose authority we're taking away at that point. Are municipal councils aware of the impact that this would have on the running of their own local governments? Do you not think it would be worthwhile for those governments to have an opportunity to come and comment on this and to see whether or not they see this as a good way of handling the problem?

I think this is another good reason to have public hearings on the whole Ontario Clean Water Agency. It's an important agency. The intent makes sense. Why not keep that agency within the Ministry of Environment, rather than establish a totally new and separate agency? I think that would be a very good way of approaching it, but the government, as you will know, Mr Speaker, having been part of the government for a long time until you recently became the member removed from the government, has voted for every bill and every decision that the cabinet has asked for. With the exception of a few New Democrats, there isn't anything that isn't presented in this House that doesn't pass in the Legislature.

I'm worried that there won't even be much listening done to the concerns that we have to raise about the Ontario Clean Water Agency, but we will do our best to make sure that they are understood.

Then we also have formed the Ontario Realty Corp. I have to say that this corporation has tremendous powers. I read from section 59: "Without limiting the powers or capacities of the corporation, for the carrying out of its objects, the corporation may expropriate and use any land." Note, "the corporation may expropriate and use any land."

I have problems with expropriation by any level of government, at any time, unless it goes through a thorough evaluation so that the interests of all are understood and the interests of the property owner are fully and completely defended. The problem we have with giving this power to the Ontario Realty Corp is that the rights of the property owner are being removed.

I have to challenge why the government wants to put more of that power in its own hands and remove it from other people. I say that every time we start giving another crown corporation the right to expropriate, it's just another example of the erosion of the rights of individual Canadians. Inasmuch as the Constitution does not protect property rights for Canadians, this gives the Ontario Realty Corp more rights to subvert those rights of an individual.

I'm satisfied that the realty corporation will have a purpose, but I'm not satisfied that the realty corporation will be accountable to the government. There are so many examples. First of all, how much land is going to be falling into their land that you call surplus and how accurate will the price be? We know the government will get a price for the land when it sells it, but will it be market value? Who establishes the market value of the land?

We're dealing with several thousands of acres that exist in York and Durham that are owned and controlled by the Ontario government that were purchased through the Ontario Land Corp for the possible airport that would be on the east side of Metropolitan Toronto. That land has been rented out and leased and used in part, but now the province is beginning to look at that land as an asset that it's going to develop and it's going to have that land made into communities.

One has to ask, what value would the land be? Is the province going to get fair market value for it? Has the province looked at innovative ways of reducing the cost of housing for people where the government retains the ownership of that land for a long period of time and gives people the right to lease the land, not unlike what has happened in some of the Ontario native reserves and not unlike what happens with some of the large corporations that are using land in downtown Toronto, where the land is available on a long-term lease?

It would tremendously reduce the cost of housing if in fact the province retained ownership of this land, if instead of trying to sell off all its assets it would say, "All right, this is our land; we are going to take a rental for the use of that land for a period of time"—like a long, long time—"so that the ownership of the land never is divested from the province of Ontario."

What instead is happening is that I have worries. Are we getting market value for the land when we're selling it? Are we selling off some things in land and property that should not be sold off? That is all part of this new way of the government trying to clean its books and

make them look okay. The government is saying, "Well, we'll sell GO Transit and we'll get some money out of it." You're selling an asset that really shouldn't be sold. Is the government going to sell certain buildings and properties that really are part of the heritage and the long-term history of what the province is all about?

What we're doing with the Ontario Realty Corp is giving that right to the realty corporation, when it's given by the government to them, to do what they want with our land, the land that belongs to all the people of the province of Ontario.

This building belongs to everyone, and I make a point when young people come through for tours that this is their building: "Enjoy it. Come and see it because it's yours. Walk the halls. It's yours to enjoy." The government of Ontario is here to serve the people of Ontario. We, as legislators, are only borrowing this space while we're elected, and once we are out of office, all we take from this building are our files and a few pictures, but the building stays, the furniture stays, what is the government's stays.

Let us have a sense of knowing that we do not own anything that is of the province of Ontario. It is all the people's, and all the people want to make sure, in this year, the 100th anniversary of Algonquin Park, that Algonquin Park, as an example, will always be a treasured piece of Ontario's history, and our natural park system will always be that, and that with the lands and so on there is some sense in which we are able to separate those lands that are truly surplus and not important. Yes, I can see them being useful for other reasons. Let them be passed on and let them be recycled; let them be sold.

But let there be also a sense of a mission statement that clearly defines and delineates what the government means by surplus land. Let there be a policy statement that truly outlines what it is that the province is going to sell through the Ontario Realty Corp, and that not all things will fall into its purview. Let there be a clear statement of intent, and not just in the words that come through a press statement or a press release or a ministerial statement in the House. Let it be something that goes in the bill so that it's like a bill of rights, property rights for people in the province of Ontario so that those things that make up our heritage and make up our history are protected from being sold off.

It's an important principle. It's an important principle as to ownership and people's rights. It's an important principle that is not defined elsewhere. It is not inherent to the Ontario bill of rights, and as a result, it means that government can at its whim do things that may not be in the public interest.

1750

I speak, for example, of the Rouge Valley park. We've come a long way; in fact, very shortly we will begin to enjoy for ever this park as a jewel in this

community, as other beautiful parks are enjoyed in other communities, that can never, ever be traded or sold off. Yet the tragedy is that the government has defined the park in such a way that it's outlined an area where the Interim Waste Authority may place one of the dumps for the greater Toronto area in York region, M6, and M6 is right there on the valley lands leading into the Rouge Valley park. The government says, "Here's the jewel of the Rouge Valley," south of Steeles, and then just north of it, there in the town of Markham, as it has in Whitevale in Durham, it sets aside a piece of land that's also part of the Rouge system and identifies that as a possible landfill site.

Let there be some integrity, integrity that allows us to know and understand and believe that the government is not going to on one hand say, "We'll do this," and then on the other cloud up the issue and do what it wants to do. Let there be a clear statement of the government's intentions on dealing with our property and the people's property and let it be something that is part of the bill and not just something that is going to be shoved aside later on. Let's do it up front with people. Let's do it at the beginning, before the bill becomes law. Let's hear from the government as to how the land's going to be used and what it's going to do with it. Let's hear how the government's going to separate surplus lands from non-surplus. How do they know? Do they have a long enough view of the future of our province or are they so wrapped up in the debt problems and the debt that they've helped create that they can't see beyond that?

I plead with the government to have a bigger view. Don't have such a short-term vision that you can only see things for 1993-94. We should have a vision of Canada for the year 2093 and 3093 and that the heritage that we have today is something that we will value for ever for our children and our grandchildren and their children's children.

The flaw of government today is that we deal only with the present and in looking at the present we fail to get the vision of the future and understand that the whole of what this country's all about, the whole of what this province is all about is far more important than just giving away pieces here and pieces there. It's part of our heritage and it's part of the legacy of previous generations. When our forefathers and new Canadians were given this province, we were given something to cherish and to look after and to pass on, not something to cut up and break up and give away, not something to go and move from being a capital asset to funds to operate as an operating cost. Let it be something that is valued and appreciated.

I have no trust in an Ontario Realty Corp as having that kind of sensibility to the future of what Ontario is all about and I worry, and I'm worrying openly now, that we, in passing this bill, are just giving them a

further opportunity to erode something that is too worthwhile to keep, too precious to keep. Don't give away Ontario. Don't give away Canada. We've done so much of that in what politics have become in the 1980s and 1990s. We've lost something of holding on to those things that mean something and living within our means while we do it. So it concerns me that we're expected to just happily go along with what the government is trying to put forward.

This is a complicated bill. It's a very, very complicated bill. It's moving the debt from the province to another corporation. It's just another way of mortgaging our children's future. It's another way of moving the debt from the books of the government to a crown corporation. It's another way of saying, when they come up for re-election, "Oh, we've reduced the number of civil servants by 3,000 people." Maybe that's the number of jobs that'll be created and moved around and shuffled into these new crown corporations.

Mr Runciman: In the private sector they call it fraud.

Mr Cousens: My good friend from Leeds-Grenville is correct in his assumption.

As we come now and say: "Why are we doing it?" it doesn't at all make sense that the government would come along and force us into this new set of relationships. You see, the kind of powers that will now move out of the Legislature and out of accountability, that will move away from estimates, that will move away from each minister's accountability, that will move into these secret preserves—it starts off with \$800 million this year and \$1.2 billion next year and \$1.7 billion the next year, and over time this is going to become one major holding agency for the province of Ontario. This agency is going to have unbelievable powers over the rest of our province. As I look at the bill, it worries me.

You go to the fine print again. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations prescribing debt and financial obligation limits for public school boards, secondary school boards and boards of education, including—it defines the debt. It's changing the way we did things in the past. It's changing it from a system where you're accountable in the fiscal year in which you're elected and for that fiscal year to ways of moving the debt and the responsibility out of this court, out of this House, into other agencies, hiding it. It's deceptive. It's another way of just clouding the issue and changing the rules.

There are other aspects to this bill. I look at some of the sections and I look at the way in which the government can now borrow money through this agency, how school boards will be able to borrow money, how they are going to incur more debt, how at least the power is there for them to have more debt than they ever had before, without the checks and balances and controls that were traditionally there. That is a concern, because

I don't think there should be a school board or municipal council or a hospital board or public board that has more debt.

Come on. Move back. Cut back. Live within our means. Stop spending more than we're taking in. Find ways to become more efficient. Find ways to be totally accountable to the public for what you're doing and how you're doing it. Don't allow yourself to fall into the trap that says we today can enjoy tomorrow's future when in fact we should be doing everything we can to make sure that as we take our taxes, we spend the money, it is within the limits of propriety, and that propriety is to live with balanced budgets at every level of government.

The point that the member from Leeds-Grenville has made many times, and I think it's one of the fundamental pillars of good government, is to understand that there is only one taxpayer, who's paying federal taxes, provincial taxes, regional taxes and county taxes, municipal taxes, school board taxes. There is only one person who pays all those bills, and what we have to do as legislators is understand that we're now taking that one person and saying: "You're going to be paying a toll to get to work. You're going to be paying more for your water." Maybe we should, but we're going to be paying more for sure because of the powers of this bill. "You're going to be paying more for your hospitals, for your schools and for your universities because of this bill. You're going to be paying more because the province is now setting up a special authority that's going to have that responsibility."

I can understand why the province wants to move some of the capital out of this year's budget and spread it over a period of time. I could see there being certain

benefits to that. If we could find ways in which we could do that under the responsibility of Management Board or the Minister of Finance, let's do it. Let's instead look at ways of working with the existing systems instead of creating and building new systems needing new people, new bureaucracies, new investments by the province in order to keep them going.

Let us think of that and let us, as we build for the future of Ontario, do what we can to find those efficiencies now, not continue to try to buy our way out of these problems just with new corporations and new systems. Make the old systems work. Find ways of getting more and more out of the people who are there. Make it so that the people who are part of the system are totally accountable for what it is they're doing. When you do that, you've done what is going on in private enterprise and business and elsewhere where people have had to find those systems and make a go of it. Don't pretend that you've got all kinds of money to do it. Go to it with a sense of urgency to be efficient and competent and accountable. Don't pass off all of those to other agencies and groups. Keep them within your hand, and if you make a mistake, stand or fall by it. Don't just give it off to someone else to be responsible.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr Cousens: Thank you. I'll close off now, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: It now being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning, Thursday, June 3, at 10 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1802.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 2 June 1993

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	
Anniversary of Queen's coronation	
Mr O'Neil	1083
Mr Carr	1083
National Access Awareness Week	
Ms Carter	1083
Mrs Marland	1085
Paramedic services	
Mr McGuinty	1083
Boating safety	
Mr McLean	1084
Italian National Day	
Mr Perruzza	1084
Transfer payments to municipalities	
Mr Bradley	1084
Dundas Kite Festival	
Mr Abel	1085

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES	
Community economic development	
Mr Philip	1085
Mr Grandmaitre	1086
Mr Kwinter	1087
Mr McLean	1087
Mr David Johnson	1087

ORAL QUESTIONS	
Social contract negotiations	
Mr Elston	1088
Mr Rae	1088, 1090
Mr Harris	1090
Women's issues	
Ms Poole	1089
Mrs Grier	1089
Labour legislation	
Mr Harris	1092
Mr Rae	1092

Education financing	
Mr Beer	1093
Mr Cooke	1093
Race relations	
Mr Harris	1094
Mrs Boyd	1094
Automotive industry	
Mr Owens	1095
Mr Rae	1095
Soft drink containers	
Mr Offer	1096
Mrs Boyd	1096
Tourism industry	
Mr Arnott	1096
Mr Laughren	1096
Employment equity program	
Mr Malkowski	1097
Mr Charlton	1097

Ministerial response	
Ms Poole	1097
The Speaker	1098
Mr Curling	1098
Mr Wildman	1098

PETITIONS	
Gambling	
Mr Offer	1098
Mr McLean	1099
Mrs Marland	1099
Mr Drainville	1099
Mr Hayes	1100
Mr Henderson	1100
Mr Villeneuve	1100
Public service employees	
Ms Carter	1099
Seniors' health services	
Mrs Fawcett	1099
Mr Cleary	1101

Bruce generating station	
Mr Jordan	1100
Mr Elston	1100, 1101
International trade	
Mr White	1100
Mr O'Connor	1101
Post-polio syndrome	
Ms Harrington	1101

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES	
Standing committee on regulations and private bills	
Ms Haeck	1101
Standing committee on government agencies	
Mrs Marland	1101

FIRST READINGS	
Community Economic Development Act, 1993, Bill 40	
Mr Philip	1102

Motor Boat Operators Certification Act, 1993, Bill 41	
Mr McLean	1102

SECOND READINGS	
Capital Investment Plan Act, 1993, Bill 17	
Mr Owens	1102, 1110
Mr Phillips	1103, 1110
Mr Cooke	1109
Mr Cordiano	1109
Mr Turnbull	1109
Mr Cousens	1110

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 2 juin 1993

PREMIÈRE LECTURE	
Loi de 1993 sur le développement économique communautaire, projet de loi 40	
M. Philip	1102
Loi de 1993 sur l'accréditation des utilisateurs de bateaux à moteur, projet de loi 41	
M. McLean	1102



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Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 3 June 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 3 juin 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

Table of contents

Table of contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears on the outside back cover.

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A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Thursday 3 June 1993

The House met at 1005.

Prayers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

CHRONIC CARE PATIENTS' TELEVISION ACT, 1993

**LOI DE 1993 SUR L'INSTALLATION
DE TÉLÉVISEURS APPARTENANT
À DES MALADES CHRONIQUES**

Mr Ramsay moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 18, An Act to permit Patients receiving Chronic Care to install their own Television or combined Television and Video-Cassette Recorder / Loi permettant aux malades chroniques d'installer leur propre téléviseur ou leur propre combiné téléviseur-magnétoscope à vidéo-cassette.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The honourable member for Timiskaming will have 10 minutes to open up remarks. Then every official party within the Legislature will have 15 minutes, with the honourable member for Timiskaming having two minutes to wrap up.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): Today, I'm very pleased to be able to stand in my place and to really take advantage of a wonderful procedure that we have in the Ontario Legislature that many legislatures right across the world don't have, and that is the opportunity for a legislator in this place to bring up an issue that is important to one of his constituents and, I hope, to many people.

In talking about the bill today, what I want to say is that when you read the bill, it's very simple, and maybe to some it might appear to be inconsequential, but to many it is not inconsequential, because what we're talking about is equality of treatment and we're talking about caring.

The situation that I have found and that has been brought to my attention by a Mr Sampson in Kirkland Lake is that when he was trying to pursue permission from the hospital in which his wife Eleanor finds herself in the chronic ward to install—the family wanted to buy a gift for Eleanor of a TV, and in this case they wanted a TV combination videocassette recorder so that she could play movies. She ran into a policy at that hospital that many hospitals in Ontario have, and that is that many hospitals have contractual arrangements with companies that basically rent TVs only to their patients.

I am going to show a lot of exceptions to that this morning. There are some excellent hospital policies out there in Ontario, and what I want to do today is to persuade the other hospitals to change those policies.

In fact, Mrs Sampson is unable to supply her own television set, and the rental in a lot of these hospitals

and in her hospital in particular is \$82 a month. Her family has to pay on her behalf \$82 a month for her to have the "privilege" to watch television.

I guess this really begs the question of why this is important, and I just would like to talk about some of her reasons for a moment before I get on to the general subject of this.

First of all, I made the first point that for many people the rental of a television at this exorbitant price, \$82 a month, is extremely high. In fact, that would be for most people about 20% of their old age pension. I think that's an exorbitant amount of money to have to pay for the privilege, so-called, of watching television.

The rental units in hospitals are extremely small. In fact, most of them average around a seven-inch screen. Obviously, these are frail people, because they are in chronic wards, and they have difficulty in seeing such a small screen. The rental TVs will not allow a VCR to be attached; they don't have that capacity and most hospitals won't allow that to happen, so that extra enjoyment most of us have the privilege of, to have a movie, is not there for those patients.

Many chronic wards have large televisions established in rooms down the hall. They have, actually, very nice lounges in most chronic wards and other places where chronic patients find themselves, but again, some chronic patients are too frail and don't have the mobility to get down to those rooms. So they need the convenience to be able to have the availability of TV in their own rooms.

I guess it would be really the time to talk about who this affects, because as I'm initiating this proposal on behalf of Mr and Mrs Sampson in Kirkland Lake, there are many people out there today watching who are shut-ins, who find themselves, because of ill health, watching TV a lot. They find themselves in many respects in nursing homes and homes for the aged, in chronic care hospitals and chronic care wards of our acute care hospitals. Those people find themselves in a place that now has become their home.

I think that's the point of all this. Yes, hospitals are institutions and hospitals have to be run as businesses, but hospitals in the chronic care facility in that setting are these people's home. I think they should be allowed the regular accoutrements that we all feel comfortable in having, that we call home. Something basic today in an age of telecommunications and mass media, the ability to have one's own television that one purchases, so that this is not an additional cost to a hospital, I think should be allowed.

I'd like to say that the other reason I'm bringing this up is that, as you know, most hospitals have patient advocates. In this case, the decision was appealed to the

patient advocate, and again, this request was overturned. That's why I feel today that I needed to take this another step and try to bring this through as a private member's bill.

When I started to look into this, I thought maybe this was just an isolated matter; I found it wasn't. I had one of my assistants—as a matter of fact, my legislative intern, John Martelli—start to do some research on this.

We looked at the chronic care hospitals. There are basically 19 hospitals in Ontario that are absolutely specialized to chronic care. Actually, 15 of those have policies that do allow their chronic care people to have their own television sets, so there's some very good news there, and/or their own VCRs, and I think that's great.

We couldn't call all the hospitals across Ontario, but we started to do a random sample of about 30 of them, and it looks like only about 40% of those do not allow patients to have their own television sets. So there obviously is a recognition out there that this is a need.

What I want to do today basically is to push the point, to try to influence those other hospitals to make this happen for their patients, because I think that's very important. What this really strikes is that there's a tremendous discrepancy out there in the rights and privileges, if you will, of chronic care patients in Ontario, and I think this should be straightened out.

I want to talk about why there might be some reluctance there. I have great sympathy for that. I used to be a chair of a hospital in my riding. I was a chair at a time in the early 1980s when hospitals were given the permission to derive revenue for themselves. In fact, they were really encouraged to derive revenue as much as they could, because hospitals are a business and we have to try to run them more businesslike and we have to make sure they're cost-effective. This is obviously one avenue that hospitals can use to raise revenue. In fact, I'm not against this very thing being applied to acute care patients.

Many of us go to hospital and we're maybe there for a couple of days or maybe a couple of weeks, and maybe it's not that much to ask to pay a rental of \$5, \$6, \$7 or \$8 a day, if it's only a few days, to watch television. I can see the hospital getting the revenue from that and especially from having to pay for the service of bringing that in, installing it and taking it out when it's only a short time period. But when somebody's in there for chronic care, I think it's very important that they be allowed to have their own TV set.

Before I conclude my opening remarks, Mr Speaker, I'd certainly like to tell you some of the remarks we've heard from people representing hospitals. These are the people who think what I'm doing today is not a very good idea.

We had one administrator say, "Listen, we're not

running an entertainment centre here; we're trying to run a hospital." I'd like to say to that administrator: "Well, no, you're not in the entertainment business. You're in the caring business." I think we forget that sometimes, that if you're running a hospital, you have to do it in a businesslike manner, right, but you are in a caring business, and that's the point I want to make today.

Another hospital administrator said: "We've never had anyone ask us for their own personal TV and we sure don't encourage it. If one gets one, they'll all want it." Well, I'm here today to say as an advocate that I think they all should have them if they want them, especially if people can't afford \$82 a month to supply their own television entertainment.

Another employee of another hospital said: "Are you kidding? This place is looking for every penny it can get." Again, I am very sympathetic to that, especially when governments of the day obviously are cutting down on budgetary requirements. What I'm saying to hospitals is, I'm encouraging you to forgo that sort of revenue, from taking that from people who probably are the most susceptible people you serve in your system.

Let me read, before I close on this segment, one of the positive ones. This is from one hospital administrator who said:

"Of course they are allowed the choice to use their own televisions or VCR. As long as the equipment they bring to the rooms is CSA-approved, our policy is that exceptions are made for our chronic care patients. The cable company comes in and hooks up cable if they want it and the bill goes directly to the patient or their families. In fact some of our chronic care patients have their own telephone line, which runs in a similar manner."

So some hospitals understand that a chronic care room is a home for a person, and in some cases this is the last home that a person has. I'm looking for support from all my colleagues to support this bill so that we can make that life, and maybe the end of those lives, as comfortable as possible. I think that's the least we can do for these people.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I welcome this opportunity to comment briefly on second reading of private member's Bill 18, An Act to permit Patients receiving Chronic Care to install their own Television or combined Television and Video-Cassette Recorder, that has been brought forward by my colleague from Timiskaming.

If passed, this bill would give chronic care patients the right to install their own television or television and videocassette in their rooms, rather than having to rent this equipment. It would allow the individuals to bring it from home with them.

I want it to be known at the beginning of my remarks

that I will be supporting this bill in principle because it deals directly with the quality of life of those patients who deserve comprehensive physical, psychological and spiritual comfort, as well as symptom control and pain management, during the final weeks or months of their lives.

While most chronic care facilities across Ontario do allow the use of personal televisions and VCRs, there's a significant number of hospitals and chronic care wards that do not. Personally, I would like to see hospitals with strict television rental policies make exceptions for chronic care residents in order to make their final home away from home as comfortable as possible rather than have to legislate this policy.

I agree that this clearly is a quality-of-life and economic issue, and I think we all agree that after studying such legislation as Bill 101, An Act to amend certain Acts concerning Long-Term Care, the government's record isn't very clear. But with Bill 101 we discovered the NDP's willingness to impose user fees on vulnerable adults, people struggling to survive on fixed incomes and others who are trying to live out their final days with dignity and a certain amount of comfort. Bill 101 confirmed the NDP's plan to charge vulnerable seniors more than \$300 a month for nursing home care. The government will raise more than \$150 million from this user fee. So these people who are paying this extra cost need some breaks, and a break would be for those to be able to take their own VCRs and televisions into their rooms.

1020

So I find it interesting that at the same time as the Health minister is paying for long-term care proposals on the backs of Ontario's frail and elderly by raising nursing home user fees by \$150 million, the same government's Municipal Affairs is giving away \$150 million worth of housing on the Toronto Islands and driving the private sector out of private day care services to the tune of \$100 million.

The government has provided some shabby treatment of Ontario's vulnerable senior citizens who are unable to care for themselves, and since 1990 more than 20 nursing homes in this province have been forced to close their doors. Nursing homes in Orillia, Penetanguishene and Elmvale all have lengthy waiting lists.

So it is unsettling that the government goes to great lengths and expense to designate, proclaim and promote one month out of the year in recognition of our senior citizens. It is unsettling because the same government continues with its discriminatory policy that requires senior citizens over the age of 70 to undergo automatic driver's licence testing in the event of an accident. Regardless of the circumstances, the government wants to penalize senior citizens over the age of 70 even if they didn't cause the accident, and that's unfair.

The seniors in this province, the increased costs that

they're having with regard to court action, real estate and mortgage transactions and the extra costs the government has put on their wills and estates, family law, this is the same government that is penalizing seniors in a government ripoff that will see the nursing home fees increased by \$300 a month. That's why we need some type of legislation like we have this morning to give those people in the chronic care role a break. The people currently using chronic care facilities and those likely to need this type of service in the future need that break.

Facilities that currently provide chronic care include freestanding public chronic hospitals, chronic care units in acute care hospitals and freestanding private chronic hospitals. The steering committee determined that there are approximately 11,500 beds in Ontario designated for chronic care, and of these, 11,080 were staffed and in operation in 1991 and 1992. These beds are used for long-term stay care programs and shorter-stay assessments, rehabilitation and palliative care programs.

Volume 1 of this study contains 42 interesting recommendations that the government has failed to comment on since volume 1 was released last month. We don't know where this government stands on this very important issue.

Recommendation 4 reads: "Chronic hospitals and units should recognize and respect the autonomy of each individual; dignity of each individual; personal, cultural and spiritual interests of each individual; and to the extent possible, should facilitate each patient's participation in, if not direct control over, decisions with respect to his or her residence, activities and care."

I would suspect that allowing patients receiving chronic care to install their own television or combined television and videocassette recorder is a step in the right direction towards recognizing and respecting the autonomy and dignity of each individual. We have the chronic care units in most hospitals on floors where there are people—some people I know in the city of Orillia, in one room they can look at a ceiling and they don't see trees; they don't see anything. They're in this room and it would certainly be nice for them for them to have their own videocassette, their own television that they could use without worrying about paying an extra cost.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I'd hoped that we weren't going to get into politics in this debate this morning. I'd hoped that, and then I heard the member for Simcoe East lambasting the government and its seniors' programs. Well, as you can see, I'm grey-haired and I can remember very well when my parents were seniors in England. We didn't have pensions and it wasn't until the Labour government of 1948 that we had health care, and they really suffered. I don't see, really, the seniors of this province suffering to that degree today. So I'm very sorry that the member for Simcoe

East decided to interject some sort of political motive to this debate of the member for Timiskaming.

I stand in my place this morning to support the member's bill because I think it is very worthwhile and I think it's very much needed.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): Good Liberal bill.

Mr Mills: "Good Liberal bill," he said. Well, it's a good bill. We're not getting into politics.

I can remember some years ago ending up in hospital myself, and I can remember that there was a crucial Blue Jays game on when this happened. I got marched in there and the first thing I said to my wife was, "I'm going to miss the game." She said, "Oh no, no problem, we'll get you a TV rental." So, as the member said, the TVs are like a postcard, you know. You're lying in bed here; the TV's up here. You can just see, sort of, the figures. You can't even read their numbers.

But I ran into a problem right away. They said, "We can't get you that TV installed, Mr Mills, until next week." So I said, "Holy smoke, I'm going to miss the game." But I said, "Never mind, I've got a small TV at home." I said to my wife: "Nip home and get it. Bring it up. We'll put it on the table."

They said: "Hold it. You can't do that." I said: "What do you mean? I'm a paying patient in this hospital. You're getting paid. Surely I've got a right to put the TV on the table." They said: "Oh no, you can't do that here because we've got a contract with some fellow who installs the TVs and takes them out and he doesn't come in until a week's time and that's when you'll get it." So I have a lot of empathy with even the people who happen, unfortunately, to end up in hospital for operations or whatever, for treatment.

Now, when we get to the chronic care patients, this is serious, because I've taken it upon myself to visit a number of chronic care residences in my own riding and I do feel rather sad when I see the lack of facilities, TV, that these folks can see because of some obligation that they have to rent from a particular company. Let's face it, most of those people who end up in chronic care are not rich; they have very limited funds.

The member has provided some idea of the funds required to rent a TV and I think this is pretty general. When you look to \$82 a month to rent a TV, \$984 a year to rent a TV that in most cases I think is about a nine-inch screen and is perched up on a long arm at the window. The type of viewing you can do is very limited. They can't even see what goes on here. They can't keep abreast of the parliamentary channel because it doesn't provide for that, whereas if you got your own TV and your own cable you can do that. I can see that this is a very, very big feature in the quality of life that people have in chronic care hospitals where they really depend on their TVs for all the enjoyment they get.

Also, I'd like to understand the opportunity of a VCR, because we all have our favourite movies and I must have seen that movie *Chariots of Fire* 20 times. I think that's the most inspiring movie I've ever seen and I can think of nothing better than if I was lying in a chronic care ward to give me some lift in life that I would like to be able to see *Chariots of Fire* again and again and again. I know I'm a bit square and it's not probably the viewing that goes on today, but that was an inspiring movie that would really help people who are under some sort of stress, I would think.

I think there might be a few problems. Every bill has got some sort of problem. I can see people dragging in TVs that they've had for 20 years, where the plug is hanging on a wire or with a piece of tape. I've seen that and sometimes I was guilty of that myself, but not any more since I nearly got electrocuted once.

But I think we could build into this some sort of inspection program whereby you bring your TV in and there's a local electrician there who can check this out to make sure that it's safe and those little things that we need to make sure that no one gets electrocuted or that it doesn't cause any fires. I think that's a minor step to carry out.

1030

Another one of our members wishes to speak to this bill. He's not here at the moment. I hope he is, because if he isn't here and I've stopped speaking, we've lost some of our time.

Interjection: Rotation.

Mr Mills: Yes, but eventually he's going to come up.

I just want to say that I commend the member for Timiskaming for bringing this forward. It addresses the real concerns of people in chronic care. It addresses the concerns of their relatives who want to provide a television, as the member rightly said, that they can see with some degree of clarity. I know that I have a problem looking at little TVs. It's rather like watching the Blue Jays from up there near the roof, you know. You see people running around, you never see the ball and then people cheer so you know they must have done something good, but you can't really see it.

Mr Ramsay: You should get better seats.

Mr Mills: I understand that. But this speaks to a real need, a real concern. The member started off his speech this morning and he said, "Some of you may think this is inconsequential." I don't believe it is. I believe that it's needed and it reaches to the heart of concern and care that we should have quality of life for those citizens of ours who are less fortunate than us. I commend the member and, when the time comes, I will be supporting it. I thank you for this time, Mr Speaker.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I'm pleased to speak in support of Mr Ramsay's bill, which

would permit patients in chronic care facilities to install their own television or a television-VCR while they're resident in the place.

I think we all know that those people who are in chronic care facilities are there not of their own choice in most cases; they're there for the longer term and they're there because they need to be for health reasons. When we were discussing Bill 101, the long-term care bill, it became very clear from advocacy centres, from consumers themselves, that there was an important aspect to people's stay in longer-term facilities in reflecting the need to recognize the dignity and the individual choice of the person who is resident in that facility.

We feel that this bill indeed is timely, because right now the manual and the regulations under Bill 101, the long-term care bill, are being developed and written. I think this bill underlines that, as we approach patients' rights or a method of respecting the dignity of patients, we should ensure, through some mechanism, the elimination of arbitrary rules that are placed by administrators of places and we should also ensure that there is a discussion of what facilities and what enhancements are in fact useful to the patient.

One of the things we should recognize—and I've spoken about the chronicity of people who are in chronic care facilities—is that frequently the recreational or entertainment vehicles that are available to them assist them in improving their health status. That has been underlined to a great extent by the advocacy groups and indeed by providers themselves.

I'm leafing through papers here, because I wanted to particularly raise a point which was contained in a letter from the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly to Mr Ramsay, and I happen to have a copy of that. The advocacy centre indicates that it has been a strong supporter of the inclusion of a patients' bill of rights in any legislation dealing with long-term care. They go on to say:

"Although in some cases difficult to enforce, the patients' bill of rights is important as a statement of both rights and courtesies that should be afforded to patients and residents in an institutional setting. These rights and courtesies are important to the quality of life of these residents."

I believe that is a very fine summary of one of the reasons that I'm supporting this bill.

I think as we look at the nursing home situation and chronic care, although this bill relates to people who are receiving chronic care, we know that chronic care recipients will be not only in chronic care hospitals but will also be in nursing homes and in homes for the aged as the long-term care program proceeds. But I think we have to be very cautious in that in the long-term care program, enormous expectations have been raised for residents and potential residents with respect to what

can be made available and what will automatically be made available to them. Certainly, we had to fight in committee on Bill 101 to ensure that a patients' bill of rights was included in that bill. Ultimately, the government agreed that the patients' bill of rights, which was previously in the Nursing Homes Act alone, would apply to all long-term care facilities.

There are other expectations that have been raised, not only about where the resident can find a place to live but about the cultural surround of the residence, about the religious services which are provided in a residence or in an institution. But even more so, there is a singular expectation raised about the care plans available to people, whether they're health and personal care, whether they're rehabilitative or whether they're recreational. I want to once again underline that while the government is demanding that care plans be put forward for patients, it has not guaranteed that it will pay for those care plans.

The purpose of this bill is to ensure and underline that one small aspect of courtesy and convenience for patients is ensured. I hope, if this bill does not proceed in the form it's now in through second and third reading and ultimately adoption, the concept will indeed be included as the regulations and the manual for long-term care facilities are further developed.

In closing, I'd like to congratulate my colleague the member from Timiskaming. I know that his office and he himself have done a lot of work in preparation for this bill. They've underlined the need for safety and maintenance standards, and I think that's a useful reminder to us all. They've underlined the fact that the courtesy of operation of one patient versus another in a ward or semi-private situation should be honoured. They've underlined that certain costs would accrue to the patient, the cost for the television but also perhaps the cost for cable, but those are issues which I think on a facility-by-facility basis can be readily handled. Along with the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly and many others, I congratulate my colleague.

1040

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I wasn't actually scheduled to speak to this, but there are a couple of points that I'd like to make, if I could just get a drink of water.

The issue seems to be rather interesting, that we're at this stage debating this particular piece of work by the member from Timiskaming. It seems to me to be a commonsense kind of issue. It's hard to believe, "Can I bring in a TV to a chronic care facility, a hospital, because I can't afford the hook-up costs. I'm here not of my own free will, I'm here because I have to be"—maybe not "own free will"—but "I'm here because I have to be, and spending a great deal of time and having very little entertainment value obviously," that it gets to this state, that we're debating in the

Legislature of the province of Ontario whether or not someone can bring a TV in for their own entertainment purposes. I will be supporting this bill. It seems to make sense to me. It's something that I would have no trouble supporting.

There obviously is a downside from the care giver point of view or the facility or the structure. Clearly they have a contract and there is going to be lost revenue. Clearly with that contract there are some kinds of exclusivity that they offer in return for a cut of the cost. So there will be a downside from a financial point of view for the facility offering the care. Ideally that means that if that revenue doesn't come from the rental of televisions, it will obviously have to come from either the patients themselves or the government commitment to the expenditure.

I can understand the fact that it's going to cost money but I think in the whole scheme of things, when you analyse that someone is in there, they simply can't afford—and the member from Durham suggests that they can't afford or they can't even see those kind of postage-stamp TVs. Any reasonable person, I think, subject to some inspection to make sure they're workable and they're safe, would agree that it doesn't seem to be a very unreasonable request. I think the administrators in these facilities would give enough thought to the request that they would simply approve it without getting into this place. Clearly, and the member brings up a couple of examples, this is just not the case.

So we're here today debating whether or not someone can bring in a TV to watch while they're in a chronic care hospital etc. Sometimes this place is kind of hard to believe and this is one of the times. Surely there must be something better we can do and surely the people we pay to run these facilities—we pay them enough that they can have enough common sense that they could make what I would think is a fairly rational and reasonable decision. So I applaud the member, I'll support it and I look forward to further comments by other members.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): While I haven't had the opportunity to sit in the Legislature over the last few minutes because of committee work, I do understand the importance of this issue and I can just imagine and guess at what the arguments are for this bill because I personally agree with the bill. I think that the member needs to be applauded for bringing such an item to the House.

I wish to just talk a little bit about why I agree with the bill. My strongest argument, I think, in approving this would be the cost factor to chronic patients who are either elderly or on some sort of a fixed income. I know that the price of the television sets and the rental of some of the VCRs in hospitals can add up to a lot of money at the end of the year.

If you look at one of the arguments—and I read this

in the package earlier—that the author of the bill had used in the package, one of the patients was paying up to \$1,000 a year for a television set in the hospital. A thousand dollars a year for somebody who's on a fixed income is a lot of money and I can't see why it's taken so long, frankly, for somebody to actually raise this issue. I'm not sure, I haven't had a chance to read in Hansard whether somebody has done that in the past, but I can't understand why this hasn't been brought up before.

Televisions are just one item that are very expensive if somebody were to take a television out with their stay in the hospitals. It doesn't include the barber and the beauty shops. It doesn't include prices like \$7 per haircut and \$3 for a wash and, of course, hairstyles are even more, \$11 a shot for somebody who wants to look and feel a little better with their stay in the hospital. You get into conditioners as well, from what I could read here, at \$2.75 to condition your hair and rinse your hair. If you want your hair rinsed, it's \$2.75. These are costs that would be above and beyond the television sets and maybe we should do something about these costs as well at a later date. Maybe somebody else could introduce another bill that might introduce us to the problem when it comes to haircuts in hospitals as well.

I'm not sure whether anybody has had the chance to stay in a hospital even for a week, let alone a year, let alone six months, but when you lie in that bed—and I've had the experience—lying in that bed for a week, you want to get out of that bed. You want to get out and get washed up and you want to get out and cut your hair and you want to feel good.

While you're in that bed, you want to watch a little bit of television, you want to be able to pass the time in a way that would mean a little more comfort for a lot, and it's not as comfortable when you know you have to pay the \$1,000 a year to rent a television set, and that's a low figure from what I can gather.

The member, I think, mentioned as well that 50% of the hospitals with a chronic care ward in Ontario are charging, and I think that's a shame. I think this bill is needed. I think it's a bill we need to pass not only here but pass unanimously in here and then perhaps get out into the community and talk about other things we could possibly be doing.

Telephones: advance payment of \$35 for a telephone. A person on fixed income can't afford this sort of expenditure. A person who's working or is collecting some sort of an insurance package can't afford this sort of cost. So while there isn't anything negative to say about this bill, in my opinion, I would encourage all members to vote in favour of this. Hopefully, we can do that unanimously and, hopefully, our government can take a look at this and expedite this package as quickly as possible.

1050

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I'm delighted to be able to stand in support of the bill being introduced by the member for Timiskaming. The member for Timiskaming is really to be commended for this. I have noticed in my six years in this place that the member for Timiskaming, Mr Ramsay, is constantly bringing issues that are of importance to his constituents and the people of the north and the people of Ontario into this Legislature.

Some may say that Bill 18 isn't an important bill, that it's not an earth-shattering bill, but it is very important to perhaps a small group of people, a group of people who are quite vulnerable. It's an act that would allow patients receiving chronic care to install their own television or combined television and videocassette recorder.

As the member for Timiskaming has quite well pointed out, when he surveyed the chronic care hospitals, out of 19, 15 of them were already allowing patients to do this. However, in a random sample of some 22 Ontario hospitals that had chronic care units in fact the numbers were much lower.

The question I have for this Legislature today is, if 75% of the chronic care hospitals in this province are already allowing chronic care patients to have their own television and VCR units, then the issue of safety is a camouflage, because obviously these hospitals would not permit something that was not safe. As the member's bill quite validly points out, there's a requirement that these units would meet the relevant Canadian safety association standards, or any safety standards established by the authority responsible for the place where the person is receiving care. It's very clear that the member for Timiskaming has brought forward a bill which is quite well thought out and which will meet the needs of chronic care patients in this regard.

There is a wide range of support for this bill. I'd like to quote from a letter from the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly. I believe the member for Halton, the Liberal health care critic, Barbara Sullivan, has already referred to a portion of the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly's letter, but I would like to read from another section. They say:

"Dear Mr Ramsay:

"I am certainly in support of your private member's bill which would have the effect of permitting all chronic care patients in residence in Ontario the choice to use their own television or television/VCR. I congratulate you on your sensitivity to quality-of-life concerns of chronic care residents.

"It never ceases to surprise me the way a certain proportion of the institutional sector dehumanizes the patients and residents living in those institutions. Access to street clothing, the right to personalized rooms with

mementoes and personal items, the access to personal televisions and VCRs, the right to have privacy to the degree possible within a hospital setting are all simple pleasures that in some cases are denied persons who live in chronic care hospitals as well as nursing homes and homes for the aged. It is a sad comment that you have to go so far as to try to get through a private member's bill to ensure these types of courtesies are afforded to chronic care patients."

One of the comments I would particularly like to highlight is that these hospitals are, for many chronic care patients, their homes. It is a very dehumanizing situation when they are in a hospital setting without their personal mementoes and things around them.

This is very important. It's important for an economic reason, where many chronic care patients would not be able to afford the prohibitive costs associated, and it's important for quality-of-life reasons. I would think that members of this Legislature would want to support all the Mrs Sampsons of Ontario who cannot afford to put so much of their pension dollars into renting a television, a very small television at that.

I commend the member from Timiskaming for his sensitivity on this issue and for very much caring about the people of his riding and the people of this province, in trying to make the lives of chronic care patients a little better in this province. I hope all members of this Legislature will give his bill their full support.

Mr Ramsay: I wish to take up the remaining time of our caucus and then proceed into my concluding two minutes, if that's permissible.

I guess, Mr Speaker, as you were asking me at the beginning, I'd like to formally move second reading of Bill 18, An Act to permit Patients receiving Chronic Care to install their own Television or combined Television and Video-Cassette Recorder.

I'd like to, first of all, thank very much all the speakers who spoke in favour of this bill this morning. I'm very pleased to have that support and look forward to having this bill approved.

I'd like to just mention a few of the other quotes of how some of the other administrators in Ontario feel about this. Here's a quote from a Toronto hospital. It says:

"We make every effort to turn chronic care rooms into homes, and that would include TVs and VCRs if requested, and even personal furniture and wall hangings, but with some minor restrictions with respect to size and safety."

Another one up in Thunder Bay:

"Yes, we make exceptions, for our chronic care patients only. Usually the family will purchase the patient a TV or a VCR as long as it's safe and they pay for the hookup and cable. For most, their rooms are their permanent residences and must be treated as such."

One might ask also, "Why VCRs?" In many cases, this is the only contact that chronic care people have with their grandchildren, that now with the advent of home videos, they get an opportunity to share in those family occasions where they can't be present in the home for those occasions. So I think that's very important if the family is able to supply that.

Another hospital says:

"Our three-year contract with the TV rental company expires this year, at which time we will change our policy. Chronic care patients will then be allowed to bring in their own equipment. We have discussed the matter and feel that it is a quality-of-life issue. It really is ludicrous that some of our chronic care patients must pay a significant portion of their income to rent a small-screen television."

Another quote from a Toronto hospital:

"The people on our chronic care floors are not considered patients. Rather, they are residents who have made their hospital room their personal home, and thus we allow TVs and VCRs as long as they are deemed to be safe by our maintenance staff. A safety log is kept on equipment, and if the resident shares a room, we request that they use earphones."

Again, it looks like the application of common sense has won out in many Ontario hospitals for sure.

I'd like to conclude to say that I think this is a reasonable request and that I understand that hospitals are in financial crisis, but I think the revenue loss from only one component of their patients, the chronic care patients, would not be undue to bear. I certainly would encourage this to happen.

I think we have to ensure, as I've mentioned, that safety and privacy matters are dealt with, and I think these can be worked out by the various hospitals. In fact, we can see that a lot of Ontario hospitals already have this type of policy in place, and so my point here today is to encourage that.

Mr Speaker, I believe I would—

Interjection.

Mr Ramsay: Yes, thank you; I have my other two minutes. Thank you.

I have been in contact with the Ontario Hospital Association. They want to meet with me, and they have certainly pointed out to me that many hospitals in Ontario have very good policies. What I certainly will be encouraging other hospitals to do, and certainly the OHA to do, is to basically put those hospitals that don't have this policy in contact with some of the great hospitals in Ontario that do have these policies: St Joseph's in Guelph, West Park in Toronto, McKellar Hospital in Thunder Bay, Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital in Burlington, as the member my colleague from Burlington South has informed me, has a very clear and humane policy regarding the use of personal TVs.

Clearly this is, as many members have said, a quality-of-life issue, and certainly the discrepancy in the policy across the province I think has to end.

In conclusion, I guess I have to thank the people who first brought this to my attention, and that is Mr and Mrs Sampson in Kirkland Lake. I know and am sure that both are watching today. Mr Thomas Sampson is watching in his home on his own personal television and, unfortunately, Mrs Eleanor Sampson is having to watch on a very small screen. So, Eleanor, I hope you can see me but I know I appear very small on your screen this morning and I know you're paying \$82 a month for the privilege of watching not only your parliamentary channels but also other shows that you enjoy.

I hope that this exercise this morning, which I really feel is going to be supported by all members of the House, will have some effect not only on the hospital that you find yourself in, but for the other people who are watching, I hope that if they don't have that opportunity, their hospitals also will, when they have that opportunity, change their mind and re-examine this policy and make sure that their chronic care people are treated with the dignity and respect that I know they deserve and are given the attention and care of residents and people who are really in their homes and not in an institution.

1100

The Acting Speaker: This completes the time allotment for ballot item number 11, second reading of Bill 18, Mr Ramsay's private member's motion.

Would the honourable member for Leeds-Grenville please move his private member's bill.

TENANTS AND LANDLORDS PROTECTION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES LOCATAIRES ET DES LOCATEURS

Mr Runciman moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 20, An Act to protect the Persons, Property and Rights of Tenants and Landlords / Loi visant à protéger la personne, les biens et les droits des locataires et des locateurs.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): I thank the honourable member. The member for Leeds-Grenville will now have 10 minutes to initiate debate, after which all recognized parties in the Legislature will have 15 minutes to participate in the debate. Then the honourable member for Leeds-Grenville will have two minutes to sum up.

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): This legislation was brought in primarily because of concerns I've been hearing as the Conservative Party's critic for the Minister of the Solicitor General in dealing with policing and law and order, community safety and justice issues.

It came to my attention some time ago about a significant problem, certainly in Metropolitan Toronto but also spreading into other areas of the province, primarily in public housing units, subsidized to a significant extent by the taxpayers of this province. I was informed, for instance, that there are approximately 400 crack dealers operating out of public housing in Metro Toronto alone. This is a significant problem. That figure has been confirmed by Metropolitan Toronto Police authorities.

It's a significant problem in not only the fact that these drug dealers are being subsidized by all of us as taxpayers in this province with very scarce tax dollars; at the same time we have people in real need of social assistance and social housing who are on long waiting lists and cannot obtain accommodation while we have people who are going after the children of this province, especially minority children, getting them involved in drugs, and we, as taxpayers, are subsidizing their accommodation.

It's virtually impossible in many instances to evict these individuals, a very difficult process, and what this legislation attempts to do is try and streamline that and make it significantly easier to evict this type of individual from apartment accommodation. As I said, my primary concern is with public housing.

Given the serious and insidious nature of the problem that this bill is trying to address, namely, the use of illegal drugs in apartments, particularly public housing units, I feel that all members of this Legislature, and indeed all Ontarians, will support this bill.

The only difficulties I've had in terms of reaction to this legislation up to this point have been from an organization representing lawyers who tend to represent some landlords, I gather, in terms of trying to evict these individuals. Because this bill will bypass that process so that a crown can initiate the proceedings for eviction following a conviction on a drug charge, it takes the lawyers out of the loop, who apparently do reasonably well, some of them in any event, in terms of representing landlords in trying to arrange evictions. That's the only group I've heard an objection from in respect to this legislation. Hopefully we won't be hearing other objections later on.

I guess we can perhaps quibble about some of the details in this legislation, but second reading is essentially dealing with the principle of legislation, and I would hope that no members of this Legislature would have difficulty with the concept, the principle, of trying to get rid of drug dealers, crack dealers, operating out of public housing in this province and jeopardizing all of us, especially the children.

Currently, it takes approximately a year to a year and a half to evict drug dealers from apartments in this province. There's nothing in the Landlord and Tenant Act specifically that mentions illegal drugs or their use

or sale as grounds for an eviction. If a landlord wants an eviction, he/she/they must find other reasons for trying to remove a troublesome tenant.

In the year or year and a half that it takes to get rid of a drug seller, at least hundreds of young people will have purchased drugs and many tenants will have been intimidated and have lived in terror in many of those situations in public housing areas.

There's an old expression about a person's home being their castle. No neighbour has the right to make life a living hell for the neighbours by operating a crack house or a drug chemical lab out of their apartment, and no neighbour has the right to bring desperate and strung-out people into a residential area, people who frighten children and often commit violent crimes because of their drug habit. No one has the right to force innocent tenants to hide inside their apartments. That, in effect, is what's happening in many areas.

I ask the members to just think about it for a moment. How would you like to live in an apartment where you weren't sure if or when you could go outside or you're scared to let your children play, where your entire life, out of no fault of your own, has to be rearranged in order to avoid drug dealers and drug purchasers?

Most of us at some point have had to live in an unpleasant area in order to work or because we simply couldn't afford something better. That's certainly true for the vast majority of residents of public housing. Children—I want to make emphasis in respect to children—growing up in poverty have enough problems without being given crash courses on drug pushing, robbery and murder by the time they are 10 years old.

People now are forced to live, in many instances, in an environment with monthly shootings and stabbings, daily fights and disputes, needles outside their door and prostitutes harassing them. We have to wake up and realize that the drug problem is the single most serious crisis facing our province. It's a crisis which is tied to so many other social problems: crime, AIDS, health care, incarceration costs, policing, unemployment insurance, welfare.

Politicians—and we in this assembly can begin this today—have to send a clear and singular message to tenants, landlords, drug sellers and police as to whose side we are on. As I said earlier, this bill will streamline the eviction process for drug sellers who use their apartment as a base to distribute drugs. A prosecutor could apply for immediate eviction upon sentencing, provided the suspect and his solicitor had been notified in advance. Landlords can apply for an order of eviction after sentencing if 30 days' notice is given.

There is still opportunity for due process here. A convicted person can appeal the eviction order and indicate during the appeal trial why they should not be

evicted. There are a variety of reasons that a judge may be persuaded—for example, they may be in some sort of rehabilitation program—those kinds of things which could be considered by the court in respect to perhaps rescinding the eviction order.

This new section of the Landlord and Tenant Act will specifically mention drug selling as a reason for eviction and will speed up the process by allowing immediate application. I want to dispel—in case we're going to hear some of this later on—some myths about the bill.

1110

Some people have stated that drug dealers can be kicked out of their apartments before conviction if they're being investigated by the police or complained about by neighbours, and this bill would stop this process. This argument is factually incorrect. No drug dealers could be kicked out of their apartment on the basis of hearsay evidence. It's true that some drug dealers are evicted before a conviction in the courts. That's only true if they get snagged on some other offence such as noise violations, vagrancy, disturbing the peace, that sort of thing. While it's true that those kinds of things certainly do come with crack houses, there are always some drug dealers who will not get nailed on these mitigating crimes and will not be evicted.

The second myth I want to deal with, and dispel hopefully, is that this bill will somehow make it harder to kick people out of apartments for other offences, that it will somehow raise the level of crime necessary to get evicted, and this too is false. People can still be kicked out for the other types of problems that I mentioned earlier. This bill will not in any way preclude a tenant from being evicted for other types of indiscretions.

The third myth I will have to deal with later on, but hopefully we're going to have support from all members of the Legislature as we proceed through this debate.

Mr David Wininger (London South): I, today, will be speaking in opposition to Bill 20, not because I think it's unimportant to control the importation and distribution of narcotics and drugs. Quite frankly, having served on the government anti-drug task force, I'm well aware, through our travels across the province and through hearing hundreds of presentations, of the need for better treatment and control of drugs. But I think that the bill put forward today in the House is draconian. It's almost like using a bulldozer when you could be using a chainsaw. It's flawed, it's redundant and unnecessary.

I would point out to you that section 107 of the Landlord and Tenant Act already provides that a landlord can take eviction proceedings if there's an illegal act going on in the rental unit. Unlike cases where there's an interruption of a tenant's quiet enjoyment of the premises or there's a case of potential safety violations, where a tenant has seven days to make

good the breach of the lease, in the case of an allegation of an illegal act, on 20 days' notice a landlord can bring that matter to a court of competent jurisdiction and seek a termination order and a writ of possession.

Not only does a landlord have to wait, as would be the case with Bill 20, for a criminal conviction, a landlord, upon becoming aware of an illegal act, can move well before a criminal conviction for termination of the lease. So in fact Mr Runciman's bill would probably slow the process down.

We've had part IV of the Landlord and Tenant Act since 1978. It provides for summary proceedings. A landlord has access to these summary proceedings, as does a tenant. The beauty of part IV of the Landlord and Tenant Act is this: On a case-by-case basis, on the strength of the evidence provided either by the tenant or by the landlord, a judge in a court of competent jurisdiction can arrive at a reasoned decision whether to evict or not.

Mr Runciman's bill, if you read it, would allow a judge, upon registering a conviction in criminal court for a narcotic offence, for some reason—and this is another flaw—Mr Runciman in his bill does not even mention the Food and Drugs Act. He only mentions the Narcotic Control Act, while many of our drug-related charges are under the Food and Drugs Act. It's a glaring omission.

But in any event, a judge in a criminal court, upon convicting an accused of a narcotic offence, could actually issue an order, without hearing any evidence from the tenant's family or neighbours or anything like that, terminating a lease, whether or not the landlord is there to make any submissions. The landlord may in fact not want to terminate the lease. That's how far this bill would go.

It doesn't pay any heed to the manner in which many drug dealers exploit vulnerable women and their children who, if a tenancy were terminated, would arbitrarily and summarily be thrown out of their premises. The sad fact of this bill is it doesn't solve the problem of drug dealing. It doesn't deal with any of the socioeconomic circumstances around the drug dealing. What it does is to force that drug dealer and his family, if he has one, to move to another residence. So it becomes yet another landlord's problem.

Any home owner or occupier of a condominium is not subject to such a sanction, nor is anyone who's found guilty of family violence, murder, sexual assault or a host of what society considers equally heinous or more heinous crimes, subject to this kind of sanction.

I would suggest, since time is running short, that we need to evaluate this particular bill on its merits. It has in fact no merits. I agree with the thrust of Mr Runciman's position that we need to deal with drug dealers, but we need to deal with drug dealers in a constructive

way that's not going to force them into yet someone else's residence so they become yet another landlord's problem.

The fact of the matter is that we have an avenue available to landlords under the Landlord and Tenant Act: summary proceeding based on illegal acts. It's an inclusive term. It can even involve breaches of municipal ordinances.

Lastly, since my time is running short, there is a constitutional issue involved. The large majority of drug offences are dealt with in the provincial court (criminal division). The fact of the matter is that in 1978, when the Residential Tenancies Act was first introduced, an appeal was taken to the Supreme Court of Canada questioning the constitutional right of a Rentalsman to evict tenants and the court held there that only a section 96 court, a court of competent jurisdiction, can evict a tenant, and all those sections of the Residential Tenancies Act were struck down.

Mr Runciman's bill would call for a provincial court judge to make a decision that superior court judges must make. For that reason alone, I seriously question the thought and reflection Mr Runciman has given to this bill.

1120

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): I'd like to start off my comments by saying that I applaud Mr Runciman's efforts. He's been long-standing and noted for his efforts in this regard. He's certainly approached this question in the past with the same intensity as he is today. I'd like to applaud him for that, because I think all of us in this House would agree that anything in our communities that involves the dealing of drugs and this plague that we have in society—all of us would agree that we would like to eradicate that.

I know in my own riding the efforts that I have personally made when we were the government. With the anti-drug strategy that we had in place, we had funds available to communities for community-based prevention programs.

One of the things that I'm proudest of in my own community is the fact that in the various Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority buildings, we now have a situation which can be described as a greatly improved one. I was just visiting one of those places this morning and was told by the tenants there that things had improved because new security systems had been put in place.

This is over a long period of time that people in my community have been making efforts at dealing with problems that all of us are concerned with. The abuse of drugs and the kind of trafficking that goes on in our cities across the province, certainly all of us have endeavoured to stem that plague that certainly still exists out there. We're not saying we have been able to

resolve the problem. That we have some measure of success is noteworthy, but in fact the war still is going on and it's still a very big problem.

So I would say to Mr Runciman—the member for Leeds-Grenville—that it is noteworthy and that it is certainly a worthwhile effort he's making to help to assist in the war against drug dealers and pushers. Obviously all of us would want to assist in that effort.

When I first looked at this piece of legislation, I thought that I could support it and I thought that there would be no reason why it would be a problem. I do support the concept and anything that would be in place to expedite the eviction, anything that would help expedite that process—I think my cold is getting the better of me this morning, Mr Speaker. As I was saying, anything that would help us to expedite the eviction of drug dealers, who are a plague on our society, certainly would be applauded by anyone in this Legislative Assembly. I can't believe for a moment that that's not the case. So let's just put that aside for a moment.

I think what it really comes down to is, does this bill accomplish that? Does it make it easier in fact to do what all of us would want to have done? I think it's not such an easy question to answer, because it is a complicated matter.

I think part of the bill that is flawed stems from the fact that under Mr Runciman's bill, someone who is convicted under the Narcotic Control Act, it would permit by this legislation someone to go through the appeals process entirely. Even after a conviction has been laid, it would allow that person to continue with an appeal process and therefore prevent an eviction notice from being granted to a landlord at the time that a conviction is held by the courts.

Given that scenario, the appeal process could go on at length. In fact the appeal process could go on and extend past the life of the tenant's lease period. So in theory, you could have a tenant who has been convicted of a criminal offence—dealing in drug-trafficking—extend his stay at those premises long past the life of his own lease. That's in theory what could happen by way of Bill 20.

Now, that is rather different from what exists under the Landlord and Tenant Act currently, under section 107, because section 107 of the Landlord and Tenant Act permits, and I would quote from subsection (1) of that:

"Where...a tenant at any time during the term of the tenancy exercises or carries on, or permits to be exercised or carried on, in or upon the residential premises or any part thereof, any illegal act, trade, business, occupation or calling...the landlord may serve on the tenant a notice of termination of the tenancy agreement to be effective not earlier than the twentieth day after the notice is given, specifying the act or acts com-

plained of, and requiring the tenant, within seven days, to pay the landlord the reasonable costs of repairing...."

But it allows the landlord to evict. It allows a method to evict this person without having to wait for an appeal process conducted by the courts, because if a person is convicted under the Narcotic Control Act, Bill 20 would permit them to remain in their premises, theoretically, long after that conviction has been held by the courts, until the appeal process is over.

That, I think, is in subsections (6) and (7). Subsection (6) reads: "The sentencing court or the Ontario Court (General Division), as the case may be, may order that the tenancy be terminated and that a writ of possession be issued, without further notice." However, subsection (7) says, "An appeal of the order may be made to the Divisional Court."

Again, I repeat, as a result of the appeal, an eviction could not take place. It would be forestalled and therefore the tenant would be permitted to remain in his or her premises until this appeal process has been expired, until all of the appeals have been exhausted.

So I say I would like to hear from Mr Runciman further on that as to how he perceives that. I don't think it's very clear how it would be that this piece of legislation, Bill 20, would expedite the eviction of someone convicted of these offences much more quickly than under section 107 of the existing Landlord and Tenant Act. That's a real question that I think we have concern with and I don't believe that it's clear. In fact I've had legal opinions now that have been given to us that suggest that is not the case.

We had several firms look at this, and I say to Mr Runciman that at first glance I was prepared to support anything that would expedite this process, and we still are, but on the other hand, I think that this legislation jeopardizes the expediting of that process. If that's not the case, I would like it proven to me before I would support this bill and I'd like to hear further comments from Mr Runciman on that matter.

I say again that in this province we certainly continue to have a problem with drug abuse and with drug trafficking and dealing. It's not something that's gone away. I have had firsthand knowledge of the problems that exist in my community. We have dealt with those, we continue to deal with them and we have a community effort that's under way to make our communities safer and to make them places in which people want to live, but it's not easy and all of us need to recognize that.

I would say to the government members that I'm certainly not impressed by the efforts that this current government is making with respect to that effort. They got rid of the anti-drug secretariat, and that was a great deal of concern for us, because some of the work that was being done in communities—one community, as an

example of this, is my own, where good work was done in very difficult circumstances in parts of the community that were in great jeopardy, having been seized by drug dealers and drug pushers etc. We now have restored some semblance of community spirit, some semblance of security within those neighbourhoods. That came as a result of the good work that was done through the anti-drug secretariat and the programs that had been established.

1130

We all understand that we're in difficult times. We know there's a call for restraint. Obviously, there's a problem in allocating additional funds. But as I recall, the secretariat's mandate was wound down, I believe, last year, if I'm not mistaken, and it was before this government indicated that it had a deficit problem which was now becoming intolerable to it. All of us had indicated that long before they realized it. But we can't allow drug dealers to run rampant in our communities. We can't allow for the kinds of abuses that we've been seeing. It is a plague on our society. We think this is a priority. We think that obviously efforts have to be made.

I know the legislation that's being brought forward by Mr Runciman does not call for additional expenditures; it is increasing powers, supposedly doing that. Again, I say I applaud Mr Runciman's efforts and I don't question his motives behind this. I sincerely do not.

I would like to hear from Mr Runciman again as to the effectiveness of that section in his legislation. My concern is with the appeal process, that an eviction notice can be halted by the appeal process in his legislation, so that someone can continue to live in their accommodation as the appeal process is winding down or going through its final conclusions, and until that is exhausted that person remains in his or her premises within that apartment building. That's the concern I have, and I hope he can rectify that as I sit here and listen to the remainder of his remarks, because I would like to support anything that certainly speaks to the concerns people have.

No one wants to see someone who's carrying on criminal activity, particularly drug dealing, continue to live in our communities and have the rights and privileges that all citizens enjoy. Obviously, there is a problem with that. We do not condone any of those actions. I don't believe anyone in this House would see it that way. I think all members would want to have swifter action taken against people who are really a plague to society in any way, shape or form that you can describe.

We all abhor those actions and I think all of us would agree that anything that would help to solve those problems would be a positive thing and something that all of us would support.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I'm pleased to rise today in support of private member's Bill 20, An Act to protect the Persons, Property and Rights of Tenants and Landlords. This bill was introduced May 18, 1993, by my colleague the member for Leeds-Grenville. If passed, Bill 20 would provide a mechanism for the speedy eviction of tenants who have been convicted of certain narcotic offences committed in connection with the rented premises.

This is a commonsense piece of legislation that provides umbrella protection of both tenants and landlords. It does not pit one group against the other that lives within the law; it zeroes in on those tenants who choose to live a lifestyle that would eventually lead to charges and a conviction under the Narcotic Control Act.

I had the opportunity to provide a copy of this bill to a Ms Patti Richardson—she's the president of the Simcoe County Landlords Association—for her consideration and her comments. The Simcoe County Landlords Association was established in 1980 and it has 150 members. Ms Richardson says she expects to have more than 500 members by the end of the summer. Many landlords in Simcoe county who want to join the association could call Ms Richardson. She's from Midland.

She indicated that she supports Bill 20 in principle and suggests that it be sent to a standing committee of the Legislature where it could be fine-tuned to meet some of the minor concerns that the landlords may have.

I believe that the recent proposals by this NDP government make it imperative that Bill 20 is passed. For example, on October 8, 1992, I spoke in support of a resolution from my colleague the member for Mississauga South which opposed the Minister of Housing's draft legislation which will allow owners to create apartments in a house without municipal zoning approval.

I'm opposed to this accessory apartment legislation because it fails to provide adequate legal protection for home owners who need to regain possession of their accessory apartments. It fails to recognize that these apartments may not offer a reasonable quality of life for their occupants or be compatible with their surrounding neighbours. It interferes with municipal zoning authority and negates official plans and decades of land-use planning decisions. It fails to provide municipalities with licensing authority for accessory apartments and it fails to consider how municipalities and school boards will pay for the services required by the residents of these accessory buildings.

It fails to ensure that there is a mechanism in place like Bill 20 contains for the speedy eviction of tenants who have been convicted of certain narcotic offenses committed in connection with the rented accessory

apartment.

The member for Mississauga South who brought this resolution to us here in the Legislature last October also raised the issue of non-profit housing subsidies here in the House two days ago. At that time, she indicated that in 1993-94, the monthly subsidy for non-profit housing would be a staggering \$854 per household. In 1981, there was a total of 68,000 units with a total subsidy of \$428,000. In 1992-93, there were 94,000 units; in 1993-94, there'll be 106,000; in 1994-95, there'll be 111,000 at a total subsidy cost of \$977,000, and by the year 1995-96, there'll be 114,000 constructed units and a total subsidy cost to the taxpayer of \$1 billion.

We need this legislation.

Perhaps it is time for this government to take note that it always advocated a system of shelter allowances which would provide direct financial assistance to needy tenants to rent their own apartments at a fraction of the cost of building and maintaining non-profit units. Subsidize the individual, not the facility. Allow needy tenants to remain in their own homes, rather than forcing them to relocate to new complexes or neighbourhoods. This would mean that the government would not have to pay millions of dollars to construct new units, as well as supplying operating subsidies.

Government members should join their opposition colleagues to give speedy passage to Bill 20, An Act to protect the Persons, Property and Rights of Tenants and Landlords.

I want to thank my colleague the member for Leeds-Grenville for bringing this legislation forward for a thorough debate, and to bring the aspects of those some 400 people, drug dealers, who are living in subsidized housing. I want to say that this brings it to the attention of many people who are not totally aware.

It was interesting that in the June 1 Toronto Sun, "Housing Horror" is what the headline is:

"But should programs keep charging ahead and charging us when there are 700,000 government-subsidized units across Canada? When annual operating budgets just in Ontario are expected to hit \$1 billion in just two more years? When Queen's Park will impose more than \$2 billion in new taxes"—in this budget—"just to keep afloat? When there are more vacancies than there have been in years?

"There are plenty of examples of public subsidies for low-income tenants being higher than the rent for private apartments that are sitting empty. But instead we get assurances that everything is hunky-dory."

What they're saying in this is an independent review is overdue. We could pay for it from the social housing industry's bills. It could save billions.

I would hope that the government members would indicate that they would support this legislation because I think it is important.

1140

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): I would remind the member that we are here to debate Bill 20, and I wanted to thank Mr Runciman, the member, for highlighting a very serious problem. We certainly all here in this House want tenants, whether they live in public or private accommodation, to live in a safe environment.

On the surface, Mr Runciman's proposal sounds reasonable, but upon further study it is revealed that there is a constitutional and a legislative problem. There are fundamental problems in the two parts of the bill for tenant eviction and the problems make the bill in fact useless.

First of all, in the first proposal, where a prosecutor initiates eviction, the narcotics offences are prosecuted by the federal Department of Justice in a criminal court. Because criminal courts follow rules and procedures established by federal law, an application about a civil matter such as this, like eviction, would not be permitted. The law, if passed, would be useless. Also, I'd like to point out that what he is proposing amounts to giving a federal prosecutor the right to apply for what is an additional punishment for committing a crime, and undoubtedly this would be challenged under the charter.

Secondly, in the bill there is a proposal that the landlord can apply for eviction. Now let's be clear. The Landlord and Tenant Act, as it now exists, is a comprehensive package to resolve any dispute between landlords and tenants. It permits landlords to apply already for evictions where a tenant commits an act which is illegal. It also applies when a tenant or their guests interfere with the reasonable enjoyment of those premises by the tenant. It also allows for eviction when there is a risk to safety. These options are available to landlords for dealing with dangerous tenants under the Landlord and Tenant Act and this is in fact faster than the Bill 20 process because evictions can happen even before criminal charges are dealt with by the courts.

There is another problem with Mr Runciman's proposal. The bill does not seem to set out any procedure to be used. This means that an application of the type that I just mentioned would have to be made using the regular and very costly rules of the court rather than the simpler process set out in the Landlord and Tenant Act.

Another further problem I see with the proposed Bill 20 is that it further divides our society. It applies not just to those who live in public housing, but it applies to everyone who rents in Ontario. It creates two classes of people: those who own their homes and those who rent their homes. Home owners, condo owners and those who live in cooperative housing in Ontario don't face the loss of their housing if they commit an illegal act, and what Mr Runciman is saying is that those others who rent do face this problem. In the building where I

live, there are those who own their units and those who rent their units. So it would be splitting and making people treated differently on that basis.

A further question I have for Mr Runciman is, you are proposing that this policy be in effect for drug dealers. Why not, I ask you, persons convicted of violent crime such as murder, sexual assault, spousal assault, child abuse, domestic violence? Why not include those?

To conclude, there is a great concern that I share. Tenants are entitled to safe homes and to not be surrounded by drug dealers. There is a clear process under the Landlord and Tenant Act, also in Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, where we can evict even sooner in a speeded-up process.

I suggest that the best, most efficient way of dealing with this problem is to open the Landlord and Tenant Act for review.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I will start by congratulating my colleague the member for Leeds-Grenville in bringing forward this act, An Act to protect the Persons, Property and Rights of Tenants and Landlords. Above all, this is to protect the innocent tenants who live around these crack dealers. We know that in Metro Housing alone we have some 400 cases of drug dealers existing in this housing today and the police find it very difficult to get these people out, as does the management of the housing.

I'd like to start by reviewing some of the costs and negative impacts of illegal drug trafficking. We know that the direct costs to society are \$1.9 billion a year. It's estimated that the indirect costs are perhaps five times that. We know that drugs destroy families and, above all, when we have young children who are in proximity to these drug dealers, they are in the formative years when they can easily be dragged into crime. We know that drug dealers are using young people as runners for them and the easy, quick, large money that they earn attracts them to crime. We must set a better example. We must protect these people.

There's an incredible burden on the state through added costs of health care, UIC, welfare, policing and correctional facilities as a result of any crime related to drugs.

Many of the people who are involved in drugs, who become users of drugs, end up going to the United States for treatment at the cost of the Ontario health service. So the taxpayers of Ontario, whether they are in proximity to drug dealers or not, end up being the victims of these drug dealers. We spent, in 1991, \$30 million in sending people to the US for drug rehabilitation.

There's a tremendous crack problem in such areas as Regent Park, Alexander Park, Parkdale, Lawrence Heights, which are all ravaged by crack dealers. Law-

abiding tenants in these housing complexes need relief and, above all, they need protection from drug dealers. There are many other problems in communities which can be certainly improved if we can take away this cancer on society.

Let's just look at the history of the lack of adequate government response to this problem. During the last government's reign, Ken Black did a study on illegal drugs and his study was widely praised. The Premier of the day named him anti-drug minister to emphasize the importance of the drug problem in Ontario. However, unfortunately he made him a part-time minister and also made him, curiously enough, Minister of Tourism at the same time. I find this a rather peculiar combination.

In 1989, the Liberal government of the day pledged to add 32 extra OPP officers to the drug squad, but unfortunately they waited over a year before they fulfilled this commitment.

One of the first acts of the NDP, when it came to power, was to disband the anti-drug ministry, which was certainly the wrong message to those drug dealers in Ontario and to the people of Ontario. They moved the responsibility for this to the parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General, and by downgrading this problem we saw that the government certainly thought there was no significant problem, and in fact we have seen no significant action by the PA, who is Mr Mammoliti, the member for Downsview. We've seen no activities of any significance on this particular matter.

1150

We know that other changes need to occur, and they are changes to the liquor act which would permit relocation of licensed premises where anybody knowingly permits the use of these premises for trafficking or with knowledge that there are people on the premises who have possession of drugs. We need amendments to the trespass act to make it easier for private property owners of shopping malls and other premises to be able to police these activities and we need to help school boards by providing additional powers to make it easy to obtain injunctions to keep undesirable people off the premises.

In closing, I would say that our leader, Mr Harris, has visited crack houses to see just the nature of these problems. I believe the leader of the Liberal Party has indeed done the same.

We hope that all parties will support this legislation, because it's for the safety and the security of our children, who must be our most precious commodity. We as legislators must find it incumbent upon ourselves to protect these innocent children. I believe that Bill 20 is a positive step in dealing with this insidious drug problem. I will close now to leave some time for my colleague to close.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I have lived at

Jane and Sheppard in my riding for almost 31 years, and in that time I've seen crime reduced, especially over the last couple of years, by 42%. It's been reduced because we have been able to get rid of the drug dealers who have plagued us for a number of years. For that reason, I am going to support the member's private member's bill, because I thoroughly believe that we need to get a little tougher, a little stronger with drug dealers.

I have no pity whatsoever for drug dealers. I think that drug dealers are the scummiest of the scums, and if we don't become a little tougher, then things are just going to get worse in different communities. They're like cockroaches: You can spray a building full of cockroaches until you're blue in the face and you don't necessarily kill off those cockroaches. Those cockroaches go to different units, they spread out, they go all over the place. We've got to become a little tougher, and that's why I agree with the bill.

That's not to say that I think the bill is the best, because there are a number of amendments that I think the bill could inherit. I think, for instance, you should include the Food and Drugs Act in the amendment. What about amphetamines? What about people who sell cough syrup? What about those drug dealers? What about the ones who go to different doctors and get prescription drugs and do nothing but sell those prescription drugs on site? That's one of the amendments that I would propose at a later stage.

The issue is clear for a lot of people. They think, and the argument would be, "Why get rid of whole families? Why evict whole families?" In a lot of the cases, the families know that the father or the mother or the son is dealing drugs. When this happens, they need to pay.

Now, you say, "Children." Some people might use the argument of children. Does a drug dealer deserve to have the responsibilities of a child? My answer is that we've got to think seriously about that. Do we want to give the responsibility of children to a drug dealer? That's another reason I agree with the bill.

Then of course the argument of the Landlord and Tenant Act is a good one, but currently MTHA is evicting people even before, at times, going to court. At least this bill deals with the issue of the court's ruling on eviction and taking under consideration the family and the innocent people. I'm going to vote in favour of it.

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I just wanted to comment briefly on some of the speeches that I've heard from the governing party, particularly the member for Niagara Falls, who put forward the comment that this was unconstitutional and it was not possible for us to put forward a law of this nature in the provincial Legislature.

Well, part of her argument related to the fact that in

many of the cases where drug offences are being prosecuted, they are prosecuted by a federal prosecutor. Well, quite frankly, it does not matter whether a private citizen prosecutes an offence, a crown attorney from the provincial government prosecutes an offence or a federal prosecutor from the federal government or representing the federal government prosecutes an offence. The law is the law, and therefore, if there are provincial laws to put into effect as a result of a criminal offence, then that can be done, as is done in the case of impaired driving.

When a person is convicted in this province of impaired driving, an immediate result is a suspension of his licence under the federal Criminal Code but, as well, there is a suspension under the Highway Traffic Act, and that is done in conjunction with the Criminal Code of Canada. Therefore, the argument that we cannot go into the Criminal Code and deal with the penalties associated with a criminal offence is wrong, false, and, quite frankly, it is misleading.

We believe that no one should stand behind a constitutional argument to protect drug dealers from dealing drugs in rented premises in this province. Therefore, I challenge all of the government members not to stand behind a fallacious constitutional argument in order to put down this bill.

Mr Runciman: I want to thank all of those who participated in the debate today, and I want to say in respect to the legal arguments put forward by members of the government side that I've had four lawyers in this Legislature—representing different parties, I might add—come forward to indicate that the constitutional questions and other legal arguments put forward by the government members were indeed inaccurate. I think it reflects badly on the research department for the government, I must say.

I want to say again that this is a significant problem. I mentioned at the outset that there are something like 400 crack dealers in Metro Housing. This is a significant problem. So to have members opposite, specifically the member for London South, express concern—it's interesting. At the outset I said the only people who have expressed concern at this juncture to me were lawyers who represent landlords attempting to achieve evictions through the process that's now in place. Obviously there is a serious problem that currently exists and we have to do something.

There may be some problems in terms of this legislation; I freely admit that. But this exercise is to approve of the principle, and I think all of us can agree—I hope all of us can agree—that we have to deal with this vermin. We have to send out the message that we want these people out of public housing. We want them out and we want them out as quickly as possible.

I'll give you an example. There are about 360 units in the Alexandra Park housing complex at Dundas.

Interjections.

Mr Runciman: There's an NDP member—what riding does he represent? Chatham-Kent. Chatham-Kent apparently has no problem with crack dealers operating in subsidized public housing. The member for Chatham-Kent—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr Runciman: The member for Chatham-Kent is interjecting that he has no problem with crack dealers operating beside public schools in this province like what's happening—beside Alexandra Park, the complex, is Ryerson Public School. The police estimate 15 to 20 crack houses operating in that public housing complex—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Runciman: —right beside a public school. And the member from Chatham-Kent apparently has no problem with that; no problem.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Runciman: The Jane-Finch area—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. Thank you. Order, please.

CHRONIC CARE PATIENTS' TELEVISION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'INSTALLATION
DE TÉLÉVISEURS APPARTENANT
À DES MALADES CHRONIQUES

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): We will now deal with ballot item number 11, Mr Ramsay's private member's bill.

Any members opposing a vote on this motion, on this bill, please rise.

Seeing none, all those in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion please say "aye."

All those opposed please say "nay."

In my opinion, the "ayes" have it. I declare the motion carried.

The bill has been ordered for committee of the whole House.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): Mr Speaker, I would request that the bill be referred to the standing committee on social development.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour of sending the bill to the social development committee, rise and remain standing.

All those opposed please rise.

Yes, we have a clear majority. The bill will proceed to social development.

TENANTS AND LANDLORDS PROTECTION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES LOCATAIRES ET DES LOCATEURS

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): We

will now deal with Mr Runciman's private member's motion, ballot item number 12. Do we have anyone opposed to a vote on this motion? If so, please rise.

All those in favour of Mr Runciman's motion please say "aye."

All those opposed please say "nay."

In my opinion, the "nays" have it.

Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1202 to 1207.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour of Mr Runciman's motion please rise and remain standing until identified by the clerk.

Ayes

Bradley, Brown, Callahan, Cordiano, Dadamo, Daigeler, Harnick, Harris, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kormos, Kwinter, Lessard, MacKinnon, Mammoliti, Marland, McLean, Miclash, Murphy, Perruzza, Poole, Rizzo, Runciman, Ruprecht, Sterling, Stockwell, Tilson, Turnbull, Waters.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. All those opposed to Mr Runciman's motion please rise and remain standing.

Nays

Abel, Carter, Cooper, Duignan, Frankford, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Hope, Huget, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Malkowski,

Martin, Mills, Morrow, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Sutherland, White, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wood.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes are 29; the nays are 25. I declare the motion carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? The bill will be ordered to committee of the whole House.

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I request that the bill be referred to the standing committee on administration of justice.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour of sending the bill to the standing committee on justice, please rise and remain standing.

All those opposed to sending the bill to the standing committee on justice, please rise and remain standing.

A majority is in favour of sending the bill to the standing committee on justice, and it is so ordered.

It now being past 12 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 this afternoon.

The House recessed at 1212.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1331.

ESTIMATES

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I have a message from the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, signed by his own hand.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): All members should rise, please.

The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending March 31, 1994, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly.

Signed at Toronto, June 3, 1993.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr Frank Miclash (Kenora): This week is Mining Week in Ontario. Members of the Legislature will have received a booklet from the Ontario Mining Association titled Mining: Building Ontario's Future. It provides important facts on the industry and its critical place in Ontario's economy.

The mineral industry has historically played a key role in the economic development of this province, making contributions to employment, wealth generation, tax coffers, value-added materials and trade balance. However, over the past few years, the Ontario mining industry has suffered from low commodity prices, increased international competition and escalating costs of production that are serving to weaken its competitive position.

The provincial government cannot directly influence the price of nickel, gold, zinc, copper etc, nor does the province have control over the development of the mineral industry in other nations. However, the provincial government is in a position to assist the mineral industry to continue to play a vital role in the economic development of Ontario through a review of largely government-mandated costs of production incurred by this industry.

During a recent tour across the province to visit the mining sites and to meet with the front-line personnel, they indicated this government was showing little interest in helping to reduce their costs. One example which was brought to our attention time and time again was the fact that as the industry shows improvements in terms of a safer workplace, their WCB contributions continue to escalate.

Tonight, the Ontario Mining Association will be holding its annual Meet the Miners reception at the Royal Ontario Museum from 5 to 7. Meet the Miners is an important communications forum for the people of the mining industry, their associates and government officials to engage in constructive dialogue. I encourage all members of the Legislature to take advantage of this opportunity.

MINISTRY RELOCATION

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): The Ministry of Health is proceeding with plans to move 500 employees from the offices on Overlea Boulevard, where they have been effectively housed for 25 years, to another location.

The rationale for this move is not known. It is rumoured, unfortunately, that the ministry wishes more attractive accommodation. What we do know is that the existing site is conveniently accessed by public transit.

The present owners of the properties are willing to negotiate concerning the space in question. As the government is committed to downsizing, the space cannot be at issue, but cost should be a consideration and a move of this nature will be costly.

In addition to the Ministry of Health, three other ministries are located in the Overlea offices. The lease for these offices expires in June 1994. There has been no indication that these ministries will be staying. If they leave, it will result in the loss of 1,000 employees from the area. The spinoff effect of this loss will impact hard on East York and will have dire economic repercussions.

At a time when all levels of government need to promote economic development and job creation, this move by the government will severely inhibit East York's ability to develop business growth in the Leaside-Thorncliffe area.

What is necessary now is a strong statement from Management Board directing the Ministry of Government Services to review the leases where they presently exist.

At a time when major ministry relocation projects are being reversed, I would strongly suggest another look be given at the appropriateness and the necessity of this proposal.

WINE AND DINE 93

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): I rise today to inform the House of a very exciting and appetizing event: Wine and Dine 93.

This first annual celebration of Ontario wine and food started earlier this week and will run through June 27. Wine and Dine 93 is a very special event indeed. Thirty-four chefs from Toronto to Niagara have combined forces with 13 Ontario wineries to create a dining experience that won't soon be forgotten.

Each participating chef has created special dishes made with fine Ontario ingredients, and this tasty cuisine has been matched to a selection of fine Ontario wines.

In addition to great food and wine pairings, each participating restaurant has organized special events such as winemakers' tastings and winemakers' dinners.

This allows patrons a chance to meet some of the Ontario top winemakers and creative chefs. Wine and Dine 93 also offers participants a chance to win great prizes.

Every Wine and Dine patron will receive a special passport. Once it has been stamped by three participating restaurants, it can be entered in a Wine and Dine sweepstakes. Lucky winners will receive one of 65 VIP winery tours or one of the 58 complimentary dinners for two.

I would like to congratulate the organizers of Wine and Dine 93 for coming up with a unique way of promoting Ontario's splendid agricultural products.

I urge members of this House to spread the word about Wine and Dine 93.

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): I have waited all week for this government to announce that this is National Access Awareness Week, but alas to no avail.

This week is designed to raise people's awareness about the disabled community and the barriers they face in attempting to lead a normal mainstream lifestyle. The intention is to highlight obstacles and barriers that exist so that they can be broken down or removed, and also to pay tribute to those who have struggled selflessly for the dignity of disabled persons.

Despite consistent efforts to normalize the lifestyle of the disabled, the government has failed to act on issues that would improve the quality of life of the disabled community.

Transportation accessibility still remains an outstanding problem, particularly in regard to intercity and intraprovincial buses. The disabled remain barred from taking this cheapest form of transport.

Slashing the employment equity internship program is another blow to access and indicates the low priority given to it by this government.

To date, the government has failed to act on a promise to implement a pilot project that will give direct funding to the disabled for their attendant care.

The special services at home and sheltered workshop programs have also been cut substantially.

Last, but not least, there has been no movement on the Ontarians with disabilities act.

My sincere regards to the disabled community for a very productive and rewarding week. I wish them the best in the coming year.

AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I rise in the House today to remind members of the Legislature that this Saturday is Cornflower Day for ALS.

The same man who said, "I am the luckiest man in the world," when he retired from the New York Yan-

kees in 1939, died of the disease known as ALS. Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, still often referred to as Lou Gehrig disease, is as common worldwide as multiple sclerosis.

ALS is a fatal neuromuscular disease that strikes one in every 1,000 Canadian adults. ALS crosses all social and economic boundaries. The average life expectancy of a person with ALS is two and a half years. ALS affects twice as many men as women.

At present, there is reason to hope that a cure is within reach. Scientists have discovered the gene that causes ALS and are now working towards a treatment and eventual cure.

For the past eight years, the ALS Society of Canada has held the annual cornflower campaign to raise funds for medical research. To commemorate Lou Gehrig's death, this Saturday volunteers in communities throughout Ontario will be selling cornflowers to raise awareness for ALS and to ask for donations to this very worthy cause. In my riding of Dufferin-Peel, the Orangeville Optimist Club is organizing the local cornflower campaign and will be offering the symbolic cornflower in exchange for a donation to ALS.

All of the money raised during Cornflower Day this year will be used for research into the cause and cure of ALS and to increase public awareness. When you see the volunteers with the blue cornflowers, please give generously so that together we can eradicate this devastating disease.

1340

TEN STEPS TO COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): I rise today before the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to introduce a group from the riding of Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings that is participating in the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food's Ten Steps to Community Action program.

This is a program that aims to develop the kinds of leadership skills that rural communities need in order to ensure their survival as vibrant places to work and grow.

I'm proud to recall that it was first introduced about a year ago by the current Minister of Agriculture and Food, the Honourable Elmer Buchanan.

I would like to thank Linda Jones, who has been the program coordinator this year, and give special recognition to this group as they visit with us today in the Legislature.

I have had a lot to say about rural Ontario since I've been a member of the Legislature. You will recall that last year I introduced a private member's resolution on rural affairs. This is a very timely visit because the Ten Steps program is now part of Jobs Ontario Community Action, which was announced in the budget. Jobs

Ontario Community Action has a strong rural component and it shows that my resolution and the hard work of the rural advisory committee in bringing attention to the needs of rural Ontario have been listened to.

Now we have an element of Jobs Ontario that will allow rural people to invest in their own communities and ensure that rural areas remain culturally and economically viable. I'm particularly pleased to see these people here today because it shows their commitment to making their own small part of the world a better place. It's good to see people who are working together so that our rural routes and small towns remain areas that we are proud to call home.

I'd like to once again thank this group for visiting the Legislature today and for participating in this program. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome the 16 Lennox and Addington Ten Steps to Community Action group members to the Legislature today.

LANDFILL

Mr Charles Beer (York North): Tomorrow marks the first anniversary of the NDP government's announcement of potential dump sites in the greater Toronto area. For 365 days, people in York, Durham and Peel have been living in constant turmoil.

Last year, the region of York launched a charter challenge against the NDP government on the grounds that the whole Interim Waste Authority process is terminally flawed.

How ironic that on June 1, 1993, just one day after this government introduced the Environmental Bill of Rights, the trial judge supported York region's anti-dump court case by giving the go-ahead for a full trial.

I want to read into the record part of the statement made by Eldred King, the chair of York region, regarding the court's ruling:

"York region has been completely vindicated in its claim that the IWA search process is invalid.

"The June 1 court decision that Mayor Bob Johnston, town of Georgina, is entitled to a trial of his claim that the IWA search process violated York region residents' rights to fundamental justice and equality clearly shows there is a serious question about the legality of what the IWA is doing.

"The government should stop the search process immediately until the legality of what it is doing is settled. Why spend tens, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars per week on work that may have to be redone," King said. "This is a complete waste of the taxpayers' money at a time when fiscal constraint should be the government's watchword."

Minister, do what my leader, Lyn McLeod, has urged from the beginning: Scrap the Interim Waste Authority process. Scrap Bill 143. Restore a true environmental assessment process with all alternatives on the table.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): The NDP Agenda for People that helped elect Bob Rae's government has become an agenda for disaster. GO Transit will hurt 5,000 people in York region who need help most. Without consultation or consideration of their ability to pay, transit riders from Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan will pay close to 100% more when they go to work or go to the doctor's office or travel to school, especially when they use GO Transit.

Public transit is used by people who need it most, people with health and physical disabilities of many kinds—blindness, epilepsy, strokes and other different disorders—people who cannot afford a car, seniors and members of the general public who don't drive. Yet the Bob Rae cutback agenda is no longer an agenda for people; it's a senseless, hurtful agenda for disaster for transit riders who rely on public transportation systems.

Don't believe the government either when it announces toll roads for new highways and roads. When I was reading Bill 17, the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp, the fine print says, "The corporation may make regulations designating any highway as a toll highway."

This is highway robbery in the 1990s. They came along and said, "We will do it for toll roads." You read the fine print, the way I did yesterday in getting ready for the bill, and they're going to, maybe, toll every road, so any 400 road, any highway, any construction.

Interjection: Come on.

Mr Cousens: Come on? Then take it out of Bill 17 so that we don't have to face up with more hurtful, disastrous actions for people in the province of Ontario.

LA SALLE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

Mr George Dadamo (Windsor-Sandwich): Mine's a little bit more positive.

The town of La Salle is proud to bring forth another strawberry festival, which promises to be even more successful than last year's. This tasty event will begin Friday, June 4, and continue through Sunday, June 6. The festival is entering its sixth year, and by all past accounts, thousands of pints of strawberries will be eaten this weekend.

Family fun is the theme again. Organizers have many interesting events planned, primarily along Front Road in La Salle. Planners of the festival highlight the fact that 35,000 people attended last year and so are equally excited about more coming this year.

Friday evening will see the opening ceremonies, followed by a steak barbecue and entertainment by the groups the Crystals and Eddie and the Cruisers. On Friday night there will be, of course, a strawberry-eating contest, followed by the fishing derby, which will see first light at 5 am Saturday morning. The parade will begin at 10 o'clock in Turkey Creek. This will be

followed by a family fun run/walk, or you can join in the volleyball tournament or participate in the baby contest and car show, where 100 vehicles will be seen.

As you can see, the La Salle Strawberry Festival this weekend will be a berry good time. I hope that the good people from Windsor, Leamington, Cottam, Tilbury, Chatham and all points in between will make the drive to La Salle for this weekend.

Mr Speaker, thanks for yourself being a berry good fellow.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES ESTIMATES

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Today the 1993-94 printed estimates were tabled. Under the rules of the House, estimates must be tabled within five sessional days of a budget being presented.

As members know, the estimates are the detailed spending plans of the government and constitute the government's formal request to the Legislature for approval. Once approved by the Legislature in the Supply Act, the estimates become the legal spending authority of each ministry.

In the budget speech I indicated that during the month of June I would be reporting on the achievement of \$2 billion in expenditure savings through the social contract. As a courtesy to the House, I would like to briefly outline a timetable for communications around the achievement of those savings.

Last month's budget outlined a two-part package to reduce ministry expenditures and reduce the deficit. The first part was an aggressive expenditure control plan which cut \$4 billion in planned spending. The second part of our package is the social contract. As members know, those negotiations are still going on, but what I want to make absolutely clear today is that this government is fully committed to achieving \$2 billion in savings. We are at the same time committed to preserving services and jobs.

The savings achieved through the social contract and the expenditure control plan, \$6 billion in total, mean that for the first time in 50 years, operating spending by the government of Ontario is actually going down. The 1993 budget provides for total operating expenditures of \$50 billion, including \$4 billion in reductions from the expenditure control plan and \$2 billion from the social contract negotiations. The 1993-94 ministry estimates include the expenditure control plan savings and will subsequently be adjusted to fully reflect the \$2 billion in measures resulting from the social contract negotiations. Included in the estimates is a table of adjusted ministry expenditures reflecting sectoral social contract savings. I will be making a subsequent announcement shortly with further ministry expenditure details.

To assure the House that it will be voting on esti-

mates which fully reflect the fiscal plan contained in the budget and to facilitate the review of the estimates, I will be asking members to amend the estimates in accordance with the changes brought forward as a result of the social contract process.

1350

Mr. Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I want to respond to the statement by the Minister of Finance and say to the people of Ontario that the chaotic management of the finances continues. I think even fairminded people, Minister of Finance, would say that nothing that you know now you didn't know in December. You could have let the school boards, the municipalities, the hospitals, the colleges, the universities know what you had in store for them for 1993. Today they are getting close to knowing what's in store for them in 1993, and I will say to the people of the public of Ontario, those organizations are almost halfway through their year and it is only today that they are beginning to see what the government has in store for them. You could have told them that back in December.

I will also say that, as we look at some of your plans, there is a plan to save \$500 million a year in pension money. I will say to the Minister of Finance—I think he will recall this—that he was supposed to make a payment to the pensions last year of \$500 million; that was not made. He was supposed to make that payment this year; there are no plans in the budget to make that payment. Now we have the Minister of Finance saying they are going to find an additional \$500 million.

I want to see where that \$500 million is coming from, because that's an integral part of the social contract talks. The government promised last year to make a payment to the teachers' pension; didn't make it. It's supposed to be in this year; it's not in this year. It is delayed. That's \$500 million. Now, central to the social contract discussions, is an additional \$500 million in pensions, and we'll want to see that.

If one reads the public accounts, there is an unfunded liability, money owing in the teachers' pension, of almost \$8 billion, yet we find these two things central to the social contract discussions: \$500 million a year in savings in the pension when the government couldn't make a payment last year and is not planning to make a payment this year of \$500 million. That I think is important as we look at these estimates.

Secondly, as we look at what's going on at the social contract table, I gather that the capital expenditure decisions will be as a result of the collective bargaining process. Certainly, I have no difficulty with others having a say in it, but in the final analysis, where we locate our hospitals, where we locate our schools surely should be a decision that is made by the public of Ontario, not at the collective bargaining table.

As we look at the decisions that are being made, I

think in haste, for obvious reasons—the Treasurer has to find \$2 billion—I will say there is great danger that we are going to make some fundamental mistakes in the interests of reaching a \$2-billion decision very quickly with a gun at the head.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): What would you do?

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education asks what would we do. We would have started long ago to tackle it. When you have a gun to your head, you are going to make dumb decisions, and I predict, when you sign this contract—the Premier says, “Why raise these issues now?” We are raising these issues now because when the contract comes forward on Monday, we will raise those issues on Monday.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I didn’t say anything.

Mr Phillips: The Treasurer says there are significant savings. Again, we will look at the estimates, the savings from deferred savings. That’s a strange statement to me, savings from deferred savings. Essentially, there are expenditures that should have been made this year that the Minister of Finance has simply delayed till next year. I understand that, I understand the problems they’re in, but there are \$540 million of savings from deferred savings. Essentially, they are simply the postponement of expenditures.

I also want to comment a little bit about some of the other things that are in the estimates. Perhaps the most challenged groups out there right now are our municipalities, our hospitals, our school boards. How they are going to handle the capital in the future is very interesting.

The province used to provide grants of \$600 million a year in capital for school boards, for hospitals and for colleges and universities. You know what’s going to happen in these estimates, Mr Speaker? The school boards, the hospitals, the colleges and the universities are going to have to borrow the money for the province and lend the money, the \$600 million, to the province. That’s part of these estimates.

The school boards and those other organizations are going to go out and borrow for the province \$600 million, and then the province will let that debt run up and pay off one twentieth of that each year. Five years from now, we will owe \$3 billion to the hospitals and the school boards; 10 years from now, \$6 billion. That’s what’s in these estimates and that’s why we look forward to a significant debate on them.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I just want to make a few preliminary comments about how disappointed I was not only with the budget but disappointed as well, reflected through the tabling of the estimates today.

The Premier promised us a three-pronged attack on the deficit and we agreed the deficit had to be dealt

with. It was to be a three-pronged attack, he told us: roughly \$2-billion tax hikes, \$2 billion from the public sector employees, the extended public sector employees of the province of Ontario, and we thought there was a third prong: that they were going to cut back government spending, that they were going to participate, they themselves.

Last year the deficit was \$12 billion, the Treasurer told us. It’s in his estimates and it’s in the budget. We know there’s a tax hike of \$2 billion. That should tell you that the deficit this year will be \$10 billion. We know there’s \$2 billion coming out of the pockets of the civil servants and the public sector workers, who are also taxpayers; they’re getting hit twice. That means the deficit should be \$8 billion. If they actually participated, even \$2 billion, the deficit should be \$6 billion. But the deficit is \$10 billion. Why? Because the third prong, the part where you cut back yourself, is not here. You hiked your own spending \$2 billion so taxpayers are ponying up \$2 billion. The public sector workers of this province, 940,000, they’re going to pony up \$2 billion, and you, in a disgraceful way, are still increasing your own program spending by \$2 billion. I think it’s a disgrace, I think it is a betrayal and you have misled the people of this province with what you told them in your budget.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. The leader of the third party strays over the line. He should really choose his words a little more carefully and not suggest that a member is misleading.

Mr Harris: He’s not misled the House today. They’ve hiked spending \$2 billion. It was in the public statements out to the people, so I hope that clarifies it.

The Speaker: Helpful.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): If everyone could come and have some honesty at the table, we’d go an awful lot further. The Liberals come along today and say, “Oh, well, you should have started sooner.” You should have started back when David Peterson started spending the money a few years back because we’re reaping the harvest from when they went along and had complete abandon with no responsibility and now you come forward and, as we look at your books now, it’s hard to add them. I mean, you’ve got so many places where the rounding is so large, we’re talking in the orders of billions of dollars, and you’re moving money around in such a mysterious way.

The tragedy is that as we in the Legislature try to find time to look at these estimates that are being tabled today, I can just tell other members of the House who haven’t been around as long that we won’t have a chance. It’ll all come to the last minute and there’ll be a rush-through of the estimates and this Legislature will not have the time to reflect and discuss and debate and investigate the books of this government. It hasn’t happened for years and it’s time it started to happen,

because then there is some accountability that goes on. At this point, the government is able to use its majority to rush through anything it wants and we in opposition are not given the chance to make that kind of thorough inspection that is our right and our responsibility.

We look at this estimate process and now the Treasurer is saying, "Well, we're still hoping for \$2 billion." I'm concerned with your whole concept of the future of Ontario. What we've got to do is get Ontario moving again. Have a vision for this province and this country that we're actually participating in growth. Ontario's always been known as the engine of growth in this country. Well, you come along and say, "Here, we can actually point to the fact that the government is going down." You should also comment that business and industry are having the biggest struggle and the most difficult time they've ever had, and you as a government are adding to their problems with the kinds of budget tax hikes that you have announced. There is no doubt that you're going to be driving people out of work this year. Some 50,000 people will be losing their jobs because of the \$2-billion tax hike.

I am in support, as our leader is, and I want to thank our leader, Mr Harris, for commenting on this in the way that he has. We're looking for a positive approach to the deficit and the budgetary and monetary policies of this government. It can't be done unless we have some integrity on the part of those who are sitting down. I just wish that this government and this Finance minister would come clean with the books and tell us exactly what's going on instead of—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

1400

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier. The deadline for the social contract talks is coming closer and closer and we are becoming more and more anxious that in some of the panic of last-minute negotiations there are going to be significant and long-term decisions made that will affect the future of health care in this province.

We have seen a copy of the latest paper that has now been put before the health care table at the social contract talks and it would appear that the government has put the future of private labs, the ambulance system and private long-term care providers on the social contract table.

A bargaining table is not the place to make long-term decisions about the future of health care in this province. This is not the place to start making tradeoffs that are going to have long-term consequences. I ask you to assure us today, before these talks go into their 11th hour, that you will not shut out private health care providers as part of a deal cut at the social contract table.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I've made it a practice as much as possible not to comment on every single exchange that takes place down at the Royal York Hotel and I'm going to try to keep to that rule today and certainly in the next number of hours.

I would say to the honourable member that of course the private sector, indeed the medical profession as private practitioners, plays a critical role in the health care system. The issue, however, of efficiency and savings to government and savings to the taxpayers of the province and also the quality of services that are provided are issues which are always open to discussion. I would hope that the honourable member would agree with that conclusion and would agree with the fact that in any government assessment of its expenditures, first of all, it's reasonable to discuss those with employees and it's reasonable to look for ways of saving taxpayers money.

I would suggest to the honourable member that some of these issues are issues that are going to take some time, obviously, to explore, that we're looking in the next day or so at a conclusion of a set of basic policy frameworks for the future and that's the direction that we're taking.

Mrs McLeod: I want to be clear that my question is not on the issue of physicians and physicians' services. My question is on three issues that are in the latest proposals put on the social contract table relating to private medical laboratories, ambulance services, long-term care providers, and that includes nursing homes, it includes home health care providers.

You will understand our concern because this idea that your government has of squeezing the private sector out of the provision of care is hardly a new one. It's been quite obvious that you have a stated preference for non-profit care.

When the union asked that this policy be pursued in their initial response to the government's social contract proposals, it did call forth a written response from government officials, and I'm glad that you've touched on the issue of the social contract talks focusing on cost-effectiveness and saving dollars because your officials, when they responded to the union proposal, said very clearly in writing, "The pace of implementation of this policy preference"—the policy preference for non-profit care—"will be affected by the very significant costs involved in a movement towards greater reliance on not-for-profit services in long-term care."

We are concerned that in the dying hours of these negotiations this policy has been put back on the table, despite the fact that your own officials have acknowledged that it will cost more money. Premier, again I ask you to assure us that you will not support decisions that are made in the heat of the moment which will in fact result in a more expensive health care system, not a less expensive one.

Hon Mr Rae: In a very general sense, I would say to the honourable member that of course the question of cost-effectiveness and quality of services that we deliver to the citizens of the province is the critical test. I certainly don't think these are issues that are resolved on ideological grounds. I think these are issues that are resolved on practical grounds.

The public hospitals of the province in their laboratories offer services which in many cases are ready to be used more widely. That's a fact. The ambulance services of the province, I think we all recognize, have been subject to considerable review. We have a report from Dr Swimmer which is before the province. So obviously the issues of the quality of services and the efficiency are critical, as well as the issue of costs.

But quite apart from the preamble to her question, the focus of the actual thrust of her question was, can I give my assurances that we will not do something that's going to end up costing more money. I can only say to the Leader of the Opposition it's not my intention to be authorizing or approving policies that are going to end up costing the province of Ontario more money.

Mrs McLeod: Given the statement that your officials have made in writing, that certainly in moving towards not-for-profit exclusively in long-term care there will be a significant cost, we should be able to assume that those proposals will now be taken off the social contract table before those discussions proceed any further. Clearly there are not cost savings to be effected with this move.

The reason they are not likely to be taken off the table is because of the pressure at that table, which we understand, which is a pressure to preserve jobs, and that is clearly going to be the focus in these last hours. That is why I want to be sure you understand that you are not simply going to trade private sector jobs for public sector jobs.

When you put the private sector health care providers on the table as part of the bargaining process, you are jeopardizing private sector jobs across this province. Jobs are jobs. There are real people in those positions. There are real people who will lose their jobs if you shut down these private health care providers. I just ask you again for an assurance that you will not make last-minute tradeoffs with the unions at the social contract table that are going to put people in the private sector out of work by squeezing out private laboratories, private ambulance services and private nursing home operators and other health care providers.

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to the honourable member that obviously the issue of jobs in the economy is the crucial issue for the whole of the province, and we are determined, and the purpose of the social contract discussions is to provide a sense of greater fiscal reality and fairness as we look at the next three years and to provide the basis for some major long-term restructuring

of the public sector so that we can in fact deliver services more efficiently and fairly to the citizens of the province.

If the honourable member looks back at the history of her own government, and I know that it's not something that she likes to do, but perhaps she might reflect on the fact that when the Liberals were in office between 1985 and 1990, non-profit deliverers of service were given access, that in fact in terms of the new nursing home licences, non-profit deliverers of service were given a leg up, were given in fact preferred access in terms of many services. Those are facts, but I think—and I can understand it in question period—she's reading a little bit much into what she's got in front of her. I think she's extrapolating from that into a set of scenarios—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —that really don't have anything to do with the policies of this government.

Mrs McLeod: There's no extrapolation here. There is a very clear policy, a policy which could well be put into decisions in the next 24 hours in a bargaining setting which has nothing to do with making good long-term decisions.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I question, as the Premier talks about the principles of fiscal reality and fairness, whether or not the other group of people in the health care field whom I want to address with my questions today feel as though they are really operating on principles of fairness.

I was dismayed to hear the news last night and this morning about the 1,100 Ontario physicians who attended the US recruiting fair at the Royal York last night. You will be well aware that a great many of those who attended the recruiting fair were from this year's graduating class of doctors.

Last week the member from Halton Centre asked you whether or not you would encourage student doctors to attend the fair, and perhaps it was a little bit of a rhetorical question, which of course you didn't answer. But in fact you and the Minister of Health did encourage this year's graduating class to attend that fair in large numbers. You encouraged it by telling this year's graduates that they are not going to be able to practise in Ontario, and you certainly made the recruiters' jobs easier.

When asked what she says to convince residents to come to the United States, one of those recruiters said: "We don't have to tell them anything. Your government has already done that. In fact your government, by its actions, is the best recruiter we have."

1410

Premier, I ask you today, will you stop this exodus of a whole generation of doctors? Will you send a clear

signal to this year's graduating doctors that you will abandon this foolish policy, that you will let them know that there is a place for them Ontario?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Sometimes I find it hard to believe my ears when I hear the Leader of the Opposition reaching for really the rhetorically absurd. I would say to her very, very directly that when she says this government has told the younger doctors or newer doctors coming into practice they can't practise medicine in Ontario, that is false and she should know it's false. She knows it isn't true. I'm astonished that the Leader of the Opposition would come up with that kind of rhetorical exaggeration. Indeed it's an exaggeration that leads to the utterance of an absolutely preposterous statement. She should know far better.

I would say to the honourable member that we have been discussing a proposal with the Ontario Medical Association as well as with the Professional Association of Interns and Residents of Ontario. Dr Evans has been involved in some discussions in which other proposals are being put forward, and we look forward to hearing what other proposals and other answers.

Let me perhaps say to the honourable member, is she saying that it's not legitimate for governments to try to control costs? Is she saying that the problems of the underserved areas are being adequately addressed by the current programs which were put into place by the Conservative and Liberal administrations? Is that what she is saying?

Is she saying the government should not be expressing any concern about costs? Is she saying that Ontario should be the only province in the entire federation which is not going to have a serious program of attempting to control costs of physician services in all of Canada? Is that now the position of the Liberal Party of Ontario? What has Mr Bourassa done in Quebec? What are other governments doing in western Canada? What are governments having to do across the country?

The issue of the control of health costs is there. It's on the table. We're facing up to it because you avoided it the entire time you were in office, five years of evasion—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —because you avoided them for all that time.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, I would suggest to you that, in the last eight weeks of sheer panic after you discovered you had to deal with your deficit problem, you have jeopardized all of the good work which in fact a previous Minister of Health under your government was beginning to do to control health care costs in this province and you have put the lives of the graduating class of medical students on hold. I ask if you think this is exaggerated or preposterous rhetoric that you go and

talk to those young people. They will tell you that they have got to make decisions about their future today.

You can't give them a much clearer message than was given to them when they were told that there are only a handful of communities in this province in which they are free to practise. Let me tell you too that you gave a very clear message to about 2,011 other communities that were told that they could not hire new physicians. We hear from those communities on a daily basis, because they are worried about how they are going to meet their health care needs, not only today but in the future, as you drive out a whole generation of young doctors.

Premier, what are you telling these communities when you tell them that these young doctors cannot practise here? Are you telling them that their concerns are exaggerated and preposterous?

Hon Mr Rae: No, I'm saying that the Leader of the Opposition's description of the situation is. I mean, in her quest for whatever headlines she's trying to seize on a given day, she's reaching for higher and higher levels of rhetorical preposterousness. I recognize that it's an occupational hazard, I can say to the Leader of the Opposition, and I think I understand it when I see it. I think I'm seeing it and I've heard it very clearly the last little while.

I would say to her very directly that we are, first of all, engaged in some serious negotiations and some serious discussions, as are other governments across the country, with respect to the control of the cost of physician services and the cost to the entire province of this and, secondly, ensuring access to services and ensuring increased access to services in many communities, including, I might say, many communities in northern Ontario, which I would have thought the Leader of the Opposition would know full well.

When I hear the Leader of the Opposition saying, "Oh, well, the status quo is fine and everything we did is fine"—health care costs up 11% per year, every year you were in office. We were left with a situation when we took office in which the system was literally unaffordable. We have to make it affordable, we have to make it workable and we have to work with a system which needs to be reformed.

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: We are reforming it. We are negotiating and we are dealing with some tough problems, problems which you as Liberals systematically avoided during your term in office.

The Speaker: Would the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: Good-time Charlies who now don't know what to do.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): What is preposterous is this government's approach to the whole

issue of planning the policy for physician resources in the province for today and for the future. I want to just outline in my preamble the kinds of things this government has done and why everything is so chaotic out there.

We have the Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis at McMaster charged with looking at this issue. We have an interim economic agreement between the government and the OMA whose first priority is charged with looking at the issue of physician resources. Out of the blue, we have a stupid announcement put on the table as part of the social contract discussions that our newly graduated interns and residents will be locked out of practice *de facto*, if not fully. Then we see a \$110,000 panic piece of advertising talking to that same campaign.

The Speaker: And the question?

Mrs Sullivan: Then we see a new committee, chaired by Dr Evans, struck to get you out of hot water, and last night, Premier, we saw your—

The Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Mrs Sullivan: —Minister of Health making a new announcement, on the run, in the corridors at the Royal York Hotel, saying, well, maybe you'd approach it in a different way, when there's been no proper policy work done.

The Speaker: Would the member please place a question.

Mrs Sullivan: I'm asking the Premier to address this very serious question: Why is this policy being made on the run, in corridors, in panic situations and without a full policy development process that all of the mechanisms are in place to allow for?

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to the honourable member that she—

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Tell us where they can practise, Bob.

The Speaker: Order. Would the Premier take his seat for a moment, please.

Mr Mahoney: Where can they practise?

The Speaker: I ask the member for Mississauga West to please come to order. Intemperate language will not be helpful. Premier.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): How many would have graduated?

The Speaker: Order. The member for Etobicoke West, please come to order.

Hon Mr Rae: I would say directly to the honourable member that I'm not quite clear what her complaint now is. Is she opposed to the work that Dr Evans is doing? Is she opposed to the fact that there are discussions—

Mrs Sullivan: It's chaos and you know it.

Hon Mr Rae: She's opposed to the fact that there are discussions going along with payroll and the OMA. Well, this confirms my view of question period today. Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition's concern was that we would not be able to reach a deal; today the concern of the Liberal Party seems to be that we might reach a deal and how terrible that would be. I think we got a sense of that.

There are discussions and negotiations going on which are involving directly the interests of the younger doctors as well as the interests that the province has with respect to controlling the cost of physician services and the cost of medicare across the province, just as is taking place across the country, and it took this government to do it. I can tell the member this issue has been raised by the government for some time.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Halton Centre, please come to order.

Hon Mr Rae: There's no question we now feel it has to be dealt with as a matter of priority. I'm quite confident that we will be dealing with it successfully.

1420

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I have a question to the Premier, and let me say that it's never easy to cut back. We have pointed out some areas where we would have wanted to proceed very differently and some of the mistakes we believe you've made. Having said that, this is the last day of the House before tomorrow's deadline. We wish you well today and tomorrow and hope that you're successful.

Having said that, my question, though, is about the budget, something that you can do something about and that was within your control. My caucus last week, when it was constituency week—we think you brought the budget in in hopes that the anger might go away—toured this province and asked Ontarians what they thought of your budget. Today, if a page can assist me, I want to table the first 3,500 responses, if you'll take those over to the Premier and the Treasurer.

Of these responses, only 26 agree with your budgetary direction, less than 1%. We received support from people in the Ministry of the Solicitor General, in Financial Institutions, in the Ministry of Environment and Energy. We are receiving letters and faxes daily asking us to do whatever we can to change your mind.

They all agree the deficit's a problem. They all tell you they're willing to take spending cutbacks, even when it affects them, instead of a \$2-billion tax grab. Given that 99% of the Ontarians we are talking to say cut spending, don't hike taxes, what more do we have to do to get you to listen?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I think I'll ask the author of the budget to answer your question, the Minister of Finance.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Minister of Finance.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Thank you, Mr Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity.

I think the leader of the third party was serious in his question and I'll try to give him a serious answer, because I spent last week travelling the province, as did my colleagues back in their own constituencies, consulting with people all across the province as well.

Since the leader of the third party sent over a box of ballots, I wanted to make sure that everybody understood what the question on the ballot was. I mean, talk about a time for leadership and tough decisions. This is what the leader of the third party asked the people of Ontario with this ballot. It's an option to tick off one of these two boxes,

"I agree with Mike Harris that Ontario needs a 1993 provincial budget with no tax increases, cuts in government waste and a prosperity plan to create jobs and renew the economy."

That was one box the taxpayer could check off.

Hon Mr Rae: Check that tough choice. Would you like to have free beer tomorrow or not? That's the question.

Hon Mr Laughren: I can just imagine taxpayers agonizing over the choice here. The next choice was, "I agree with Bob Rae that Ontario needs a 1993 provincial budget with \$2 billion in tax hikes and a \$10-billion deficit." Check off one of those, Mr Speaker. Talk about tough leadership for tough times. I have to hand it to the leader of the third party.

Mr Harris: I didn't read the ballot because I knew that you would, and I appreciate it. The ballot is really straightforward and what Ontarians told me was pretty straightforward and they had no difficulty making that choice, and the choice is exactly as you read it. They all know, you see, that tax hikes will stifle the economy, will kill jobs. They know that, and so they're prepared, as our ballot and the explanation sheet do say, to take cutbacks, even if it affects them.

Now listen, there's one sector of the economy that we are getting agreement on will grow as a result of your budget. It will flourish. All the experts tell us that. That's the underground economy, Canada's underground economy, estimated by some to be worth \$90 billion a year.

A managing economist at DRI Canada says, "When top tax rates hit the 50% range, people work less and they do whatever they can to dodge taxes." By 1994, our highest tax rate will hit 53%.

What is it that makes you think you can get more revenue when people won't be working, you're going to lay off more people, our exporters will be more uncompetitive and the number one growth area is people trying to figure out how they can avoid paying

taxes? How is this helping the deficit or the economy of Ontario?

Hon Mr Laughren: I guess I have a different view of the Ontario citizens out there as well, because both during the pre-budget consultations and then after the budget as well, what people were telling me was that while no one likes to pay more taxes—who does? I understand that—they wanted us to do three things.

(1) They wanted to get the deficit going in a downward trend rather than an upward trend. We've done that.

(2) They wanted us to reduce expenditures in the public sector. We've done that. For the first time in 50 years, we're reducing expenditures in this province.

(3) They wanted essential services, in particular health care and education, preserved. We are doing that as well.

We are doing what the people of this province told us they wanted us to do.

Mr Harris: When the Treasurer delivered his budget, the day before and the day of, Bob Nixon was here in the Legislature in Toronto. I didn't know why. I finally found out why when the budget was delivered. It was because Bob Nixon wanted to be here just as Gordie Howe wanted to be with Wayne Gretzky when Gretzky broke his points record. Gordie wanted to be there to congratulate him. I figured out Nixon, the biggest taxpayer in the history of the province, wanted to be here to congratulate Floyd Laughren when his record was broken. I don't know any other reason why he was here.

You criticized me because I didn't put the Liberals' position on the ballot. I looked for it. I couldn't find it. If I'd known what it was, I'd have put it on the ballot and given people a choice for that too.

The Treasurer would have to agree this is the single largest tax hike in the history of Ontario. Your government says you think it's important to hear what our constituents have to say. Over 99% of them are telling us this: "We would like the government to cut back on government spending by that \$2 billion instead of the \$2-billion tax hike. We'll help. Even if it affects us, we'll help them set priorities."

Will you listen to the people and accept their invitation to help you find another \$2 billion in cutbacks in government spending and avoid the need for this tax increase altogether?

Hon Mr Laughren: I must respond to part of the preamble of the leader of the third party's question. When he said that he couldn't find the Liberal position, I don't think he looked very hard, because clearly the Liberal position is to increase spending substantially, no new taxes and reduce the deficit all at the same time. You should have put that on the ballot as the Liberal position. I just wanted to make that clear.

But in a more serious way, we did take a look at the committed spending of this province for this year we're in now. We said, "That must be reduced by \$4 billion." We took a look at compensation in the public sector. We said, "That must be reduced by \$2 billion." That is \$6 billion in reduction in committed spending for this year. We are going to achieve those numbers. We are committed to those kinds of expenditure reductions, but for us to have now gone back, instead of taking \$2 billion in tax increases—I understand his position—we would have had to reduce expenditures in the public sector by another \$2 billion.

By our estimate, that would have cost at least 20,000 jobs, perhaps 30,000 jobs, in the public sector. The leader doesn't give the option of whether they're tax increases—

The Speaker: Will the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Laughren: —or job reductions and talk about how many jobs would be lost with the next \$2 billion in expenditure reductions. That is not what I think is good public policy when we're dealing already with a high unemployment rate.

1430

HEALTH CARDS

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): My question is to the Premier. I hold in my hand a copy of the social contract proposal submitted to health sector groups yesterday. One of the proposals made by the government was "to continue implementation of stricter monitoring and control mechanisms against fraud and abuse of OHIP cards."

For the benefit of all taxpayers in Ontario, will the Premier tell us what his government has done and what it specifically intends to do to deliver on this promise that was made at the social contract table yesterday?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'll refer that question to the Minister of Health.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): As I've said in this House before, the ministry has set up for the first time in the history of OHIP a portion of the office that is devoted to better registration and monitoring of health cards.

As has been raised in this House before, as a result of the preliminary work of that registration branch, we have in fact reduced significantly the number of cards that are held or were being used by people who were ineligible for OHIP. It is the first time that this kind of an examination has been under way.

Let me say to the member that it is certainly our intent to improve the way in which cards are monitored, to continue to remove people from the use of OHIP cards who are ineligible to use them and to build on the work that the secretariat has been doing. We anticipate that we can in fact even further reduce the number of

people who use cards who are not eligible to use them.

Mr Jim Wilson: While the minister continues to talk about what her government is doing and what it intends to do to control health card fraud, the magnitude of the problem compounds on a daily basis.

I have in my possession a health card. This card was issued a short time ago to Gordon J. MacKenzie of Sudbury. Mr MacKenzie won't get much use out of this health card because he died three years ago. However, someone else could use this card, which was issued just a short time ago by OHIP, and OHIP would never know. In the interests of taxpayers, I'm sending the Minister of Health the card in the hope that after three years, perhaps she'll get around to updating OHIP's computer.

How can you say with any credibility that your government is controlling health card fraud at the same time you're issuing new cards to people who have been dead for three years?

Hon Mrs Grier: I suspect that in fact this card was issued to Mr MacKenzie because Mr MacKenzie, had he been alive, would have turned 65 and therefore justified a new card which entitled him to the Ontario drug benefit program. I regret that Mr MacKenzie's family did not notify OHIP of his passing. I suspect they notified Bell telephone, his credit cards, his bank. They did not notify OHIP; therefore OHIP had no way of knowing that in fact Mr MacKenzie was no longer eligible to use the card.

I also hope that Mr MacKenzie's doctor, if somebody presented identifying himself as Gordon J. MacKenzie, would know very well that in fact his patient was no longer eligible to use the card.

The management of this system for the first time in the history of medicare is a responsibility of the physicians, the patients, the taxpayers and the ministry. The ministry, by the establishment of our registration control bureau, is putting in place the systems to do that.

I welcome the information from the member. I will certainly transfer it to the ministry and we will ensure that this particular card is deleted as soon as it possibly can be.

Mr Jim Wilson: The family and the physician of Mr MacKenzie felt that they did notify the province of Ontario, because I have in my hand a copy of the death certificate, which indicates the date of death of August 6, 1990. It's an official province of Ontario, office of the registrar general, death certificate, so the government was quite well aware that Mr MacKenzie passed away in 1990.

The Health ministry's own studies revealed that major shortcomings such as this were brought to the government's attention as early as April 1991. It's also clear that the government has really no idea as to the extent of fraud in the system. The deputy minister says, the

first day in committee hearings, it's a \$20-million problem. After pressure, he admits it could be up to a \$100-million problem. The government's own internal documents indicate that it's a \$691-million fraud problem.

New physicians are being locked out of practice, seniors are being asked to pay user fees for prescription drugs, hospitals are being asked to do more with less, and in the social contract negotiations, more job losses will be the result of the social contract in the health care sector.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Jim Wilson: Minister, how can you justify these cuts when you continue to allow millions of dollars to be stolen from the health care system?

Hon Mrs Grier: Part of the member's question was what action was taken when the fact that there had not been, ever in the past, effective control over health card numbers was brought to the government's attention. Let me tell him yet again that in May 1992 the registration program branch was established to do precisely what he and I agree needs to be done: get a better handle on who in fact has numbers and has cards.

The number of \$700 million that he throws around and that other people have thrown around again was an extrapolation of a number of studies' worst-case scenarios. I would remind him that within that, over \$300,000 of that worst-case scenario was identified as being payments that should be made on behalf of Ontario residents by the federal government. It was not fraud.

I should also say to him that over \$8 million was given back last year by doctors who were identified as having overbilled the system by error, by misuse. Every incident of improper use of a card is investigated and every evidence of fraud is certainly referred to the OPP. There are many cases where that has happened—

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Mrs Grier: —and everything that can be done to ensure a better control over this system has begun, for the first time, to occur.

TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Premier. Quite clearly, one of the intentions of the social contract discussions is to reduce costs through cutting payments to transfer payment agencies, and we take that as a given. But you'll recognize that there are a number of participants at the social contract table discussions that are not in fact receiving any kind of transfer payments, any kind of grants, from the province. They are still being told that they're going to have to send a cheque to you, to the province, as part of their contribution to the social contract.

I give you two examples. Ontario Hydro, which two months ago announced its own program of cuts, including job loss of up to 4,500 positions, is at the social contract table. They receive no funding from the government but they've been asked to give the province \$80 million.

The Municipal Electric Association, representing hundreds of municipal electric utilities, none of which receives a dime from the government, has been told to send the government a cheque for \$20 million as its share of the social contract.

Why are you making Ontario Hydro pay you \$80 million, forcing it to push its rates up when it's doing everything it possibly can to keep its rates down? Why are municipal electrical associations required to help pay for your financial mess, when they receive absolutely no funding from you at all?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I just would say to the honourable member that we are obviously faced with the reality of a situation which is, I can understand, uncomfortable for the Leader of the Opposition, and that is that we believe everyone in the broader public sector has to play some kind of role and some part. There are still discussions under way with all of the groups you've referred to as to exactly what form the contribution to the social contract discussions will take place.

1440

Mrs McLeod: This is not a question of my discomfort. You are creating a whole series of problems which you won't even identify as being problems.

So let me give you another one, and that's the number of school boards that are at the table that receive no grants from the province, specifically boards in Metropolitan Toronto and in Ottawa that have not received a penny in operating assistance from Queen's Park in years, and there is still tremendous confusion as to how your government is expecting to exact approximately \$100 million that it says it intends to get from school boards in Metropolitan Toronto and in Ottawa.

Your Minister of Municipal Affairs said on May 19, "Of course, the public school boards in Metro do not qualify for grants and therefore you can't take back something which they are not receiving."

So I ask you, how do you plan to force the Metropolitan Toronto and Ottawa boards to contribute to the social contract? Are Metro Toronto and Ottawa property taxpayers going to have to make a direct contribution to your empty coffers?

Hon Mr Rae: Again, and I'm sure the member will know from her reading, it's interesting that the state of Texas has just gone through a very interesting transformation in terms of dealing with the fact that there are very rich school boards and there are school boards that have a very low assessment base. Somehow we have to find a way, as we look at the future needs of the

province, to deal with that question. So I would say to the honourable Leader of the Opposition, there are discussions under way with those school boards about how a reconciliation can be effected which treats them fairly and others fairly.

But I would say to the honourable member that I know the game she's playing. Every aggrieved group out there, she's going to say, "Well, I'll advocate for you and I'll advocate for this and I'll advocate for that." She's a full-blown participant in the complaints process and she'll bring that forward. I will say to her that the simple articulation of a grievance and a complaint can never arrive at a reconciliation of public policy which is required.

Is she suggesting that somehow the school board which she used to be a chair of and used to represent in northwestern Ontario should subsidize, that the citizens of Thunder Bay should subsidize the taxpayers of Metropolitan Toronto?

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Unbelievable, my home owner taxes to subsidize you.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Etobicoke West.

Hon Mr Rae: I'll be fascinated to take that case to her citizens in the Lakehead, understanding that they're going to be subsidizing Bay Street. That'll be the day.

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: But she'll be taking another message when she goes up to the northwest and says: "Oh, no, no, no. You won't have to pay either. You won't have to pay. You won't have to pay. You won't have to pay." It lacks credibility in this day and age. It's the old politics. It won't wash. It won't work any more.

Mr Stockwell: That's criminal, absolutely criminal.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Stockwell: Home owner taxes subsidizing the province of Ontario.

The Speaker: If the member could come to order, his colleague could pose a question.

LANDFILL

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): My question is for the Premier.

Your waste disposal policy for this province indicates that you will not allow incineration; you will not consider the policy of incineration; you won't consider the policy of the long rail haul.

Your appointed chair of the Interim Waste Authority, Mr Walter Pitman, indicated in a statement made last week that was reported in the Toronto Star that legal action could easily change the context of the Interim Waste Authority's site selection process. Mr Pitman was referring to legal action filed by Superior-Crawford Sand and Gravel. They want the Interim Waste Author-

ity to consider land that they hold that's adjacent to the present Keele Valley landfill site as an expansion to the Keele Valley landfill site and as in fact a part of the IWA site selection process.

In other words, Mr Premier, contrary to your instructions, Mr Pitman is prepared to change the rules of the game. He's prepared to change the rules of the IWA and he's now going to consider another alternative. Do you agree with Mr Pitman, as your appointed chair of the IWA? Does the government agree that legal action could change the IWA's mandate and the site selection process?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Life is complicated enough without anticipating what a court might or might not do or what a court of appeal might or might not do or what anyone might do. I would offer the generic point to the member that anything any of us do is subjected to a decision of the courts. That's my definition of the rule of law.

Mr Tilson: Yes, I'm pleased to hear the Premier's agreement with that, because I do too.

Mr Justice O'Brien, as I'm sure the former Minister of the Environment just has whispered in your ear, has told you, the Ontario Court of Justice ruled this week that a trial brought forward by the mayor of Georgina, Mayor Johnston of the township of Georgina, should proceed to determine whether or not Bill 143, in the site selection process, violates the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Mr Johnston is submitting that the Waste Management Act, Bill 143, violates his personal constitutional rights and the rights of York region residents by not allowing the consideration of alternatives, specifically the policy of incineration and the long rail haul option. That was the decision of Mr Justice O'Brien.

Your government, through the IWA, has spent, as of the end of April, over \$30 million in your process to find three supersites, a tremendous amount of money. Your ministers have no idea what you'll be spending in the future as far as finding these three sites. The question has been asked and we've never received an answer.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Tilson: Yes, Mr Speaker. My question is, in light of this decision by the Ontario Court of Justice, in light of its decision that Mayor Johnston's constitutional rights can proceed to court and may be affected, will you make a commitment today to stop the IWA search for the three superdumps and allow, as our party has been suggesting since you came into this terrible policy, a full consideration—

The Speaker: Would the member conclude his question, please.

Mr Tilson: —of all alternatives to landfilling in the greater Toronto area?

Hon Mr Rae: I will undertake to make my answer shorter than the question, Mr Speaker. Mr Justice O'Brien's decision relating to the application by Mayor Johnston is a decision which obviously I'm sure the IWA will want to reflect on in terms of it's a procedural decision indicating that a trial process could take place, and I wouldn't have any comment on that decision whatsoever.

FIRE SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): My question is to the Solicitor General. The Solicitor General may be aware that in 1989 the former Solicitor General announced the resurrection of the Fire Services Review Committee, which has been in existence in some form or another since 1973.

As the minister is aware, this committee was established to modernize the provision of fire services in this province and address some of the major concerns raised by the fire chiefs, firefighters and municipalities in this province.

It's been four years since this committee was formed. Is this committee still active? Is it reporting? Are there any recommendations coming from this committee?

Hon David Christopherson (Solicitor General): I want to thank my honourable colleague for this important question. The honourable member will know, as will a lot of members of this House, that the Fire Departments Act has remained essentially unchanged for over 40 years. The Fire Services Review Committee was struck for the sole purpose of updating and modernizing that legislation and bringing it into the 1990s and preparing us for the new century.

The committee's draft report will deal with a number of important issues, ranging from firefighter safety to minimum fire protection. One of the things that the report will do is consolidate all of the various pieces of legislation into one updated law that can be referred to by the citizens of Ontario.

To answer directly the question of my honourable colleague, the draft report will indeed be out into the hands of the participants within the next few weeks.

1450

Mr Duignan: Many residents in my community and indeed from across Ontario have written to me, particularly those communities that are in the unorganized townships which have basically no fire protection. How does your ministry propose to address this situation, which is crucial to many people, especially in northern Ontario?

Hon Mr Christopherson: I think the honourable member knows, but perhaps a lot of people don't—certainly I wasn't aware until I became the minister of the Solicitor General's ministry—that indeed there is no legislative legal requirement for fire services in the province of Ontario. It is solely at the discretion

of individual municipalities.

We have of course the overwhelming majority of citizens who are covered by municipal fire departments. A lot of the smaller communities are also covered off by contracts with neighbouring municipalities that indeed have fire services, but there are a number across the province that still do not have formal fire protection.

What this legislation will do when it's eventually introduced is that it will ensure that there's a minimum standard of fire protection in the province of Ontario. In the meantime, the office of the fire marshal, which is a part of my ministry, will continue to work with communities, supplying assistance and advice and ensuring that everything that can be done will be done to provide at least a minimum level of service. The important thing is that we will have a legislated requirement for fire services in Ontario when indeed we see the legislation.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Minister of Finance. It has to do with the budget, and I hope we have a chance to discuss many items in the budget with him at committee.

The first question I'd like to ask on the budget is that there is in the budget a whole new way of spending money on capital for schools, hospitals, colleges and universities. It used to be that the province provided about \$600 million in grants every single year. It's been going on for years and years and years.

This year in the budget there is a brand-new way of providing the province's \$600 million a year. As I read the budget, it works this way: The school boards, the hospitals, the colleges and universities must go out and borrow the money on behalf of the province. They will go out and raise the \$600 million and provide it to the province in the form of a loan. The province then will undertake, over 20 years, to repay that loan. That is a strange way of doing business. It is moving \$600 million a year of government spending and government debt off the government's books on to these, I think, relatively hard-pressed organizations.

My question to you is this: What is the public interest that is being served by the province having these organizations go out and borrow the money on your behalf and lend you \$600 million a year?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I'm having difficulty with the member for Scarborough-Agincourt's analysis of how this is to be done, because it's wrong, I suspect. All we're doing is debenturing the capital for the schools or the universities or the hospitals or whatever, just the way, I suspect, if you were to do a count, most if not a lot of the schools were built in this province back in the 1960s, and 1970s too I guess. So that's not the case at all.

They're certainly not borrowing on our behalf. That's the exact opposite of what's happening. What will

happen is that simply we will pay to the school boards, to use that example, our portion of the cost of the capital and the interest to the school boards every year. So we're not putting a burden on the school boards and, secondly, they're not borrowing on our behalf.

Mr Phillips: I think we should have a good debate about this. The Minister of Finance says I'm wrong. In your budget it says very clearly that these organizations are going to go out and, on behalf of you, get \$600 million. Then it says, "This will not impose any additional cost on the institutions, as the province will provide the institutions with annual instalments required to repay the loans."

It is clear that they are going to go out and borrow, on your behalf, \$600 million a year. What will happen is that every single year the province is going to run up almost \$600 million in brand-new debt off the government's books. In five years the province will owe \$3 billion to school boards, colleges, universities and hospitals.

If the Treasurer is saying I'm wrong, I would like him to prove that. I'll give a very simple question. In five years, will you owe these school boards, these hospitals, these colleges, these universities \$3 billion? Will you be required, on an annual basis, to repay them about one twentieth of the cost? In 10 years will you owe \$6 billion? In 20 years will you owe \$12 billion?

It's an important question, because in my mind, unless we get a clean answer from this government, we can't deal with the finances. I'd like to know if in five years the province will owe these organizations \$3 billion. You say I'm wrong. Prove it.

Hon Mr Laughren: I think he wants me to make his day here. Let's use a specific example. If we went out on the capital markets and borrowed \$600 million a year for five years to provide capital funding for the schools, at the end of five years we'd owe \$3 billion to pay back for the money that we had provided to the school boards. This way nothing has changed, except that we are going to be paying the school boards every year the cost of the money and the interest payments, but the overall impact on the school boards and on the province is negligible.

Mr Phillips: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: The Minister of Finance said I was wrong and then he just got up and he said I was right. I would like to—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): No, the member does not have a point of privilege.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Move the debt off your books.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member for Etobicoke West, please come to order.

COMMERCIAL FISHING

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Your ministry

lost the court case at Cape Croker, and on the other side of Georgian Bay you lost the case with the Chippewas on Christian Island.

Taking that into account, your conservation policies are really no longer lawful in the province of Ontario. What is your conservation strategy now to protect the fish stocks in Ontario?

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural Resources): I would disagree with the member on his conclusion as to the Cape Croker and Saugeen decision. In fact, from our perspective, the decision from Judge Fairgrieve says that the province continues to have the authority to regulate the fishery, specifically the commercial fishery. The province continues to have a valid scheme of regulations which is licensing and the setting of quotas.

What the decision said was in that particular case, the case of the Saugeen and Cape Croker people, the actual quotas that the ministry had set were not justifiable. I think it is a little irresponsible for the member opposite to use that kind of language. If he cares to read the case and read it carefully, I think he will find that much of what the Ministry of Natural Resources has been trying to do and continues to try to do in terms of conservation of the fisheries resource has been held to have constitutional validity. I might say to the member, we are trying other initiatives as well, cooperative initiatives that governments in the past have tried and have failed at.

Mr Jordan: It's quite clear that the regulations you now have are not acceptable to the courts in Ontario. The fines that were given out have been rescinded. Now you're saying, as you pointed out yesterday, you have to come to an agreement on the definition of conservation, and once you've come to an agreement on that, you feel you can bring these treaties together and come up with a way of policing the fishing in of Ontario.

Now one of your own staff people indicated that with 37 treaties trying to come to an agreement on the definition of conservation, this thing could go on and on. My question to you, in all fairness, is, what is your strategy in the interim? How do you plan to regulate the commercial fishing industry? How will you guarantee your ministry's role as having jurisdiction over natural resources in this province?

Hon Mr Hampton: I can only invite the member to read the decision again, because the decision clearly upholds the authority of the Ministry of Natural Resources to regulate the commercial fishery. It also upholds the schemes and the strategies which we have utilized in the past, licensing and quotas to regulate the commercial fishery. It says that we have to be more attentive when dealing with first nations in terms of the allocations, since as we know from recent Supreme Court of Canada decisions and other court decisions, aboriginal people who can show an aboriginal or treaty right to harvest have a primary allocation.

What the decisions say is that we have to be more attentive in our work with first nations. We have been doing that over the past two and a half years and intend to continue to do that. We believe the best way, in the longer term, to regulate the fishing resource in Ontario is to work cooperatively with the first nations and work cooperatively with the other interest organizations.

I would invite the member to assist us in that regard, because I think we are making significant headway, perhaps more headway than any other province.

1500

MINISTERIAL RESPONSE

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): Mr Speaker, I just advised you that I would be standing on a point of order. The point of order refers to section 34(a) of the standing orders. As you are aware, this particular section gives the procedure for a member who is not satisfied with the response to an oral question.

Yesterday in this Legislature I directed a question to the minister responsible for women's issues. She, in turn, chose not to answer that question but in fact to direct it to the Minister of Health for response. Yesterday, prior to 4 o'clock, I filed written notice of dissatisfaction with the response of the minister for women's issues and I found that my written request was denied because I had directed it to the minister responsible for women's issues.

Mr Speaker, I would specifically refer you to the wording of section 34(a). It says, "However, a member who is not satisfied with the response to an oral question...." It doesn't say "not satisfied with the answer to an oral question"; it specifically says "the response." The response to the question I asked, which was directed to the minister for women's issues, was to refer it.

Mr Speaker, I am dissatisfied with the fact that my notice was denied, I was dissatisfied with the minister for women's issues' response and I would like you to rule why I cannot have her answer, in this Legislature, why she refused to answer my question.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Before responding to the honourable member's request, I seek a bit of information from her. Is the honourable member saying that she is dissatisfied with the minister having referred the question?

Ms Poole: Mr Speaker, I said I was dissatisfied with the response of the minister for women's issues. The minister's response was to refer the matter. I am dissatisfied with her response and that's exactly what's provided in the standing orders.

The Speaker: First, I appreciate the member's concern and she was indeed kind enough to send me notice in advance. I don't believe that the member has a point of order. However, I am quite happy to take a look at it again.

The practice in our chamber, for some considerable length of time, has been that filing for dissatisfaction is in response to the answer provided by whoever answers the question. So, to use yesterday's example, the minister chose, which is perfectly in order to do, to refer the question to another minister. That minister then provided a response. It's been our practice that a member would file dissatisfaction with the response given by that minister. That's been the practice and it's very clear.

However, the member gives me cause to think about something and I'm very pleased to do that. So I will consider it and I will converse with her later on.

Ms Poole: Mr Speaker, there's just one other point that I neglected to give you. I have asked you for a written ruling on this whole issue, but I would refer you to the copy of Hansard of yesterday. The title that Hansard, which, as you know, is a neutral, unbiased, non-partisan body, gave for my question was "Women's Issues," so I would just ask you to take that into consideration as well.

The Speaker: The member will know that the titling is unofficial and that the remarks made by members are verbatim. It's an official document, but the titling is unofficial. However, I appreciate the concern and the added information which she has provided to me.

PETITIONS

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario re Bill 38, an amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act to permit wide-open Sunday shopping and eliminate Sunday as a legal holiday.

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38. We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principle of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding when they must work and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man but dates from God's creation and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all people, both physically and spiritually. We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

It's signed by 69 residents of the province.

GAMBLING

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a petition here that's been signed by the people in Kitchener and Waterloo.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than ever before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

This is from the members at Olivet United Church and I hereby add my signature.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition with approximately 20 names on it. It's regarding opposition to casino gambling and it comes from many members, I believe, of the Kintore United Church and people of Kintore, Thamesford and St Marys area.

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

That is signed by scores of constituents of mine and I have affixed my signature as well.

1510

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activities invariably attract criminal activity; and

Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

That's signed by 41 people from the Orillia Christian Reformed Church and people from Orillia, Coldwater, Washago and Gravenhurst and I have affixed by signature to it.

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition signed by 26 members of the congregation of Immanuel Alliance Church in my constituency of Peterborough:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth of crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I have affixed my signature.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas the provincial government, in its expenditure control plan, without consultation has proposed to reduce the ability of new family practitioners, paediatricians and psychiatrists to receive full payment from the Ontario health insurance plan for services provided;

"Whereas the reduction of payments to these physicians will result in the lack of their ability to practise medicine;

"Whereas these same reductions in payments will limit the choice the citizens of Ontario will have in selecting a physician of their choice;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must reconsider this arbitrary and restrictive decision and look at alternatives in consultation with the Ontario Medical Association and the Professional Association of Interns and Residents of Ontario."

I concur fully with this petition, I've affixed my name to it and I hope the government gets on with the job.

SENIORS' HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"In response to Floyd Laughren's announcement of his expenditure control plan to reduce health care services by \$4 billion, we adamantly oppose the user fees for drugs used by seniors. We feel the druggist dispensing fees should be carefully looked at, as well as doctors overprescribing medication.

"We feel that an alternative plan will be forthcoming that will not further burden seniors."

This petition is signed by members of the Seniors' Club 162 of Smiths Falls, Ontario, and I affix my signature to this petition along with 47 others.

GAMBLING

Mr Wayne Lessard (Windsor-Walkerville): I have a petition from a number of persons from the Windsor area. It was provided to me from Reverend Marwood from the Roseland United Church in opposition to the establishment of casino gambling.

ACCESSORY APARTMENTS

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): I have a petition signed by 200 residents of the great city of Brampton and it's addressed to the Legislature of Ontario:

"Whereas the Minister of Housing and the Minister of Municipal Affairs have released draft legislation for apartments in houses, granny flats, to permit accessory dwelling units as a right in all residential areas and to permit granny flats;

"We, the undersigned, object to the draft legislation for apartments in houses—granny flats—for the following reasons and petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"(1) That the province examine the implications that the proposed legislation may have on the rights of property owners, landlords and tenants with respect to their expectations of zoning authority in the neighbourhoods in which they live;

"(2) That the province not entertain this proposed legislation removing the right of local government to regulate development without adequate public notification and opportunity to review and comment on the draft legislation;

"(3) That the local municipality be granted the authority to regulate and licence or register accessory apartments;

"(4) That the province, in consultation with local and regional authorities, examine methods of compensating the municipality for increased costs of servicing the residential growth accessory apartment;

"(5) That right of entry for bylaw enforcement officers to inspect accessory apartments during reasonable hours be incorporated into the legislation;

"(6) That representatives from the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs be requested to conduct a public meeting in Brampton to discuss the draft legislation with the community; and

"(7) That the city of Brampton support granny flats as a form of housing intensification, subject to the assurance that the units will be removed at the end of their intended use."

I have affixed my signature thereto and I agree with the petition.

GAMBLING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I'm very happy to lend my support to this petition opposing casinos, and I will add my name to it.

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): I have a petition signed by a number of people from the Christian Reformed Church in Georgetown, Ontario, protesting the opening of gaming casinos in Ontario.

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

That is signed by several of my constituents and I am happy to have signed it as well.

1520

BICYCLING SAFETY

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a petition that has been signed by approximately 213 people in the riding of Waterloo North in Elmira. They are primarily high school students at Elmira District High School. They are opposed to the bylaw on wearing bicycle helmets and they have indicated:

"I am against the new bylaw on wearing helmets while riding on bicycles in Elmira."

GAMBLING

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have another petition here from residents of the Beachville, Wood-

stock and Ingersoll areas. There are 30 names and those people are opposing casino gambling as well.

BICYCLING SAFETY

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): I have a petition that's signed by a number of residents in the Kent county area and it's dealing with the support of the voluntary use of bicycle helmets and is asking the government to withdraw the mandatory use of bicycle helmets and that it be done on a personal right of the individual that is guaranteed under the Constitution. I respectfully submit this petition to the Legislature.

GAMBLING

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

This is signed by 40 people and I have attached my name.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): This completes the time allotted for petitions.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I wonder if you could clarify for us the presentation of petitions. I'm looking at the standing orders here. There doesn't seem to be a requirement in the standing orders for us to sign the petitions and yet I know that we are requested to sign them.

I'm also not clear from the standing orders whether it's a requirement for us to read the petitions. I notice that the member for Halton North and the member for Oxford have both presented petitions this afternoon

which they simply said opposed casino gambling, but they did not read the petitions into the record in the House.

Could you clarify for us what the requirement under the standing orders?

The Acting Speaker: On that point of order, all petitions must be signed by the member of provincial Parliament making the presentation. The member can agree, disagree or not comment. That's left up to the individual member, but the petitions must be signed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

FARM REGISTRATION AND FARM ORGANIZATIONS FUNDING ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'INSCRIPTION DES ENTREPRISES AGRICOLES ET LE FINANCEMENT DES ORGANISMES AGRICOLES

On motion by Mr Buchanan, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 42, An Act to provide for Farm Registration and Funding for Farm Organizations that provide Education and Analysis of Farming Issues on behalf of Farmers / Loi prévoyant l'inscription des entreprises agricoles et le financement des organismes agricoles qui offrent des services d'éducation et d'analyse en matière de questions agricoles pour le compte des agriculteurs.

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): This new bill replaces Bill 105, the Farm Organizations Funding Act, and responds to concerns raised following the introduction of Bill 105. For example, there is no provision for fines in the new bill.

The bill allows my ministry to assume the role of collecting farm business data and forwarding farm organization fees to accredited farm organizations. Initially these organizations will be the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, the Ontario region of the National Farmers Union and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

This bill provides eligible farm businesses with the option of requesting a full refund of the fee from the appropriate farm organization. The legislation also provides for special funding to an eligible francophone farm organization.

I would urge members of this House to encourage the important work of Ontario's general farm organizations by supporting this legislation.

I would just conclude with a note that we have some members from the farm organizations with us today: Bill Weaver, who's a newly elected first vice-president of the OFA, who's with us; Carl Sulliman, who's the CEO with the OFA, is here as well; and Geri Kamenz, who is a senior manager with the OFA, is with us as well. I appreciate them taking the time to be with us for the introduction of this bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

RETAIL BUSINESS HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT ACT (SUNDAY SHOPPING), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES JOURS FÉRIÉS DANS LE COMMERCE DE DÉTAIL (OUVERTURE DES COMMERCE LE DIMANCHE)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail en ce qui concerne l'ouverture des commerces le dimanche.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The honourable member for Downsview had the floor and may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Just to pick up very briefly on some of my comments that I made the other day with respect to this legislation—and I won't belabour the point much longer because I understand that a number of my colleagues as well as many of the opposition members want an opportunity to speak on this particular legislation, so I won't go back to many of the arguments I've already presented—as I stated the other day, I understand the decision that was made and the rationale why it was made.

However, I personally don't believe that we're doing working families any favours by allowing them to either shop or work on Sundays. It's not so much the shopping, because many people consider that a leisure pastime. However, it's the working element of it that I find is offensive, and quite frankly I don't know how you deal with that particular element of the legislation, because I suspect that it will happen.

It doesn't treat families fairly. Primarily it doesn't treat working families in a fair and evenhanded way because it will force them, essentially, into the workplace and quite frankly it'll be something that will be disruptive to the family unit.

I don't believe the money arguments, because, you know, if you're a working person and you have \$100 disposable income and that's the amount of money that you're going to be able to spend, I don't believe that all of a sudden magically you're going to have more money to be able to put back into the economy if you have an additional day within which to spend that money. If you have \$100, you can spend it just as easily in six days as you can in seven days.

So I don't support some of the economic arguments that have been made with respect to Sunday shopping, and quite frankly I think this legislation will be very disruptive to many of the—we call them mom-and-pop shops, but many of our corner stores, our convenience store facilities, because now they will also have to compete on Sundays with supermarket chains and many

of the bigger enterprises, which quite frankly I believe will run them into the ground, and some day my suspicion is that we will go back on this.

1530

On the whole issue of public opinion, well, in the city of North York a referendum was taken in 1991, and if you analyse that referendum on Sunday shopping, you will find that many of the working-class neighbourhoods voted overwhelmingly against Sunday shopping. It's the well-to-do neighbourhoods that generally are more supportive of this legislation. Of course, they have the money to vacation with their families in Florida and elsewhere, and they don't mind the fact that other people have to work on Sundays, quite frankly, as long as they're not prohibited from being able to shop if they wish to shop.

On the basis of many of those reasons, I will not be supporting the bill that's before this Legislature. I will be voting against it.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): It's a pleasure to participate in this debate because the last time this issue was discussed, I was the Chair of the justice committee and I really didn't have an opportunity to say an awful lot. That was probably to the relief of a lot of people on that committee.

I remember the member from Cambridge. He was definitively against this entire issue. He used to come in with a duck or a chicken—I can't remember which it was; I think it was a duck—and he indicated—

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): Everybody wants to shop now.

Mr Callahan: My good friend from—what's your riding?

Mr Mills: Durham East.

Mr Callahan: —Durham East says everybody wants to shop now. Is that the way this government operates? You let people operate outside the law for six months or a year now and then you decide, well, if everybody wants to do it, let them do it. I'd have real concerns if you applied that logic to things like bank robbery or fraud.

That's in essence what you're saying. You, as a government, haven't got the integrity to bring in legislation until now, and what you're really trying to do—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member for Brampton South has the floor and may continue.

Mr Callahan: What they're attempting to do is now say: "Well, we've taken a public opinion poll. Everybody's shopping anyway, so let's make it legal." That is hardly the way to pass legislation, and it hardly reflects the long hours and the hard work that was put in by the justice committee when the Liberal government was in office.

My good friend from Cambridge participated in it fully. He had very serious objections to Sunday shopping. His leader was going to bring in a common pause day. He was going to ensure that workers in supermarkets and in the wholesale vegetable industry and all sorts of other industries were going to be protected, because in fact wide-open Sunday shopping was going to have a dramatic impact on these people, on their lives, their families. But I've yet to hear the member for Cambridge peep about this bill.

There were other members on the justice committee as well from the New Democratic Party who were totally against it. This was against their principles. It was not something that could be done. The Premier of the day, then the Leader of the Opposition, was pure. He was pure. It wasn't going to happen. We were going to have a common pause day. He went out to the public in the election and he told the people that. It's no wonder that the electorate is so turned off with politicians when they hear politicians on the one side of the coin saying that they're not going to do something, and thereafter they change their minds. The reason they change their minds is, as the member for Durham East says, well, everybody's doing it, so let's legalize it.

That concerns me, because the next step is what we're seeing now: legalization of casino gambling, again something that the purist, the then Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the New Democratic Party, the now Premier—he was a purist. His party said, "We will not have casino gambling." But it seems as though if everybody's doing it, let's legalize it. I wonder about prostitution. Is that next? It must be coming hot on the heels of these three issues because it seems as though that's the way the New Democratic Party operates: We'll let them operate on the sly and we will let them get away with it, and if it becomes popular, we will legalize it.

We saw this morning in private members' hour a large number of New Democratic Party members voting against a landlord having an opportunity of terminating the lease of a tenant who is a crack dealer. I found that absolutely astounding, that these people would vote against that type of a bill by Mr Runciman, the member from Leeds-Grenville. A perfectly reasonable bill: Get rid of crack dealers, let a landlord throw them out if they're selling crack out of his house. A large number—I think there were 25 members and there were only 52, I think, in the House this morning for that debate—25 of the New Democratic Party stood up and voted against Mr Runciman's bill.

What does that tell me? What does that tell the people of Ontario? We've got casino gambling, which was not going to be allowed because it would wreck the family. We've got a private member's bill this morning where they vote against it in relation to crack cocaine, the most dangerous drug on the street. We've got

Sunday shopping where the Premier preached during the election and throughout the entire time they were in opposition that they would in fact not do this, they'd have a common pause day, and where are we? We're absolutely nowhere.

This government, I think, operates on the basis of what the people are allowed to do for a period of time and then, as long as it becomes popular, we'll legalize it. I have to tell you that my understanding of leadership and of good government, for whatever jurisdiction, should be based on the principle that issues brought forward as public policy should be considered, the public should be given an opportunity for its input and, once that's done, then you make the determination of whether or not you should pass legislation to allow it or disallow it.

But not this government. This government operates like shooting from the hip. They can go in opposition and they can spend thousands and thousands of taxpayers' dollars going out on the road to listen to the public. The public told them at that time and told the committee that there were certain areas where they were concerned about Sunday shopping. Proposals were made to give the municipalities the local option, which in fact was a very wise policy, because what it did do was reduce it to the lowest common level of government, a place where people could go and air their views and tell their municipal politician, "We want it," "We don't want it."

They could have done the same thing with casino gambling. Why not give the citizens of Ontario—they're 18 years and over; they're fully mature to make decisions—why not give them the opportunity to speak out on these issues? Why should they be implemented by the Premier of this province, particularly when he campaigned so strenuously against these things as being sinful, as being family breakup matters? Now, as Premier of this province, he introduces them and supports them fully.

So I say to you, it's not the least bit surprising that the public has simply decided they're going to wait, they're going to try to "Stay alive till '95" because there's nothing they can do about getting rid of this government. They can't believe anything they put forward. They seem to have a special interest, a special agenda which is limited to certain people. It's not for all of the citizens of Ontario and, that being the case, I think people just sort of click it off and they figure, well, maybe in 1995 a government will come along that will listen to us, that will not campaign on promises and then break them.

I've given just a few examples and I'm sure the people watching this debate probably remember far more numbers of promises made by the Premier, attacks made by him when he was in the opposition, here as the opposition leader, that he has now just brought—open

the floodgates and say, "Well, let them happen." I just find that extremely difficult to handle.

We heard the Treasurer this morning talking about the very interesting type of financing he's got for schools and for hospitals. The thing he doesn't tell anybody is the fact that for 35 years this will be an albatross around the necks of our children, of their children. Yet this gentleman here, as Treasurer, is going to try to establish a principle that will be a problem not just for this government but in the future for all other governments that follow.

I have to say to you that, having watched what went on in the justice committee and having heard some of the concerns of people who came before it, it certainly was not the way to do it, just leave it hang out there and, if it becomes popular or something they figure they might win a few Brownie points on, "We'll legislate it, we'll legalize it." Well, if that's the way to—

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member for Brampton South is giving an excellent speech and I think there should be a quorum here in the House to hear it.

1540

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Brampton South may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Callahan: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the member from Eglinton drawing the Speaker's attention to that. It seems to me that a government that considers this to be a piece of legislation it wants to pass can't even keep enough members in the House to preserve a quorum.

Mr Mills: Look at the interest you've got.

Mr Callahan: The member from Durham East tries to point over to this side, but he doesn't realize that they're governing. They're the government, eh, Mr Speaker? It's their job to keep a quorum in the House to ensure that the House can operate.

If they're not interested in that, why don't they act like a dose of Excedrin for the people of this province, call an election and give the people an opportunity to take another look at the gamble they got involved in on the last occasion. It truly was a casino election. It was a casino election where people had said to themselves: "We've tried the Liberals, we've tried the Conservatives. We're now going to give the New Democratic Party an opportunity to govern."

I can tell you that as I walk down the street I don't

think there's one person who stops me and says, "Jeez, we want that government around for another 10 years." What they say to me and what astounds me is they say, "Can't you get rid of them now?" I say to them: "You can't. You voted them in. They're a majority government. You have to stay alive till '95." That's the watchword on the street.

I have to say I find it interesting that they had all of these complaints and all of these protections for union members in their opposition to Sunday shopping. The Minister of Labour, who is just coming to join us for this debate, was very adamant about the workers being given a common pause day. Yet now we find that these people will have to work seven days a week, they'll be at the beck and call of the employers, and it's all done in the interest of it being a popular thing to do.

I think that opening up a bit of Sunday shopping is a good idea. It gives people who are working in various shift work the opportunity to perhaps buy in a marketplace rather than one that's controlled. But by doing it this way, by doing it without giving the people at the local municipal level the opportunity to have their say, and by saying: "Big Brother knows best. The New Democratic Party government knows best. We don't need public hearings. We don't need to know what the public of Ontario wants. We've taken our polling and our sampling of it. It's a popular move and we're going to introduce it," it's just one more gamble. It's another casino operation being put forward by the New Democratic Party.

I suppose the only difference between this and casino gambling is that at least we get a chance to debate this in the House, because it is a piece of legislation. I have to at least congratulate the government for bringing it in the front door as opposed to the back door by which it brought in casino gambling. As you know, Mr Speaker, they can bring it in by regulation. There may have to be some house-cleaning bills to put through the House in order to implement it but, in essence, it's through the back door.

It really amazes me that there are people like the member for Peterborough. She stands up, she reads petitions about how casino gambling is going to impact on family life and how it shouldn't be brought in, yet she does this by petition, supposedly representing the residents of her community.

She doesn't have the courage of the member for Victoria-Haliburton who said to his party: "I'm sorry, Mr Premier, you and the party said casino gambling is not good. We should not have it."

Interjections.

Mr Callahan: He had guts enough to put his money where his mouth was and not stand over on the other side of the House and shout things that I can't understand. He had the guts to move into an independent

position in order to properly represent the people from his community. How many other people have done that over there? None of them.

You don't have the commitment to the principles that the New Democratic Party has espoused since day one. It amazes me that the New Democratic Party, when it meets in convention, doesn't take the whole bunch of you out and lynch you. You have gone totally astray from what the New Democratic Party policies are all about. I will be surprised—I'm going to watch with great interest what happens at the next gathering of the New Democratic Party. We will probably find that Peter Kormos will be running against Frances Lankin. You'll get one side of the room for Peter and one side for Frances, and Bob will be given a vacation. He probably wants a vacation anyway. He's finding that he can't make peace with anybody.

Sunday shopping is only going to increase and enhance the problems in this province.

Mr Mills: If you're so interested in Sunday shopping, where's your party?

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Durham East will have an opportunity to question or comment. The member for Brampton South has the floor. Interjections are out of order. Please proceed.

Mr Callahan: I think, Mr Speaker, the member from Durham East—and I don't want to provoke the zoo—I suspect wants to let his good wife—and that's all right, that's fine—know that he's here and doing his job. That's good. I like that.

However, I want to go back to the issue at hand. We travelled this province, and we spent a lot of money travelling this province, the member for Cambridge will remember. He was very pious on the hustings, very pious. He used to sit in the committee and he used to preach: "There's no way you'll have wide-open Sunday shopping. Common pause day." He got accolades from a lot of the public people who appeared before us, because they thought this New Democratic Party could be trusted. They thought they could believe in the promises that were made. They thought these people weren't just playing political games.

As it turns out, unfortunately, the members on the justice committee for the official opposition, the New Democratic Party, were in fact playing games. They were playing head games with the people of Ontario. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent going around this province, listening to these people, and while this was going on, the New Democratic Party had no inkling that it would ever form the government. They figured they never would have to account for what's happening now. They thought they could espouse the principles with a halo.

The day of reckoning came. The people of this

province gave them the right to govern. What have they done with the right to govern? They've thrown it away. They're now about to insult the people whom they said they represented, who funded them with their money, who had to pay on a checkoff to pay for their expensive campaigns. They're now down at the Royal York Hotel trying to milk a deal out of them instead of looking at the waste in government, instead of trying to collect some of the moneys that are outstanding, the \$120 million outstanding in family benefits. They give it to their own collection agency here in the government.

Would you like to know what the track record of that collection agency is? They collected 10% of \$120 million. Now, one would think that's not a bad track record, until you bring them in and you find out how much it costs to put that collection agency together within government. You wind up with it costing 20% to collect it. With 20% collecting 10%, you're down \$10 million. I'm sure there examples of this throughout the government. It's rampant.

Instead of doing that, what they're doing is they're down at the Royal York and they are trying to cut a deal. If the deal isn't cut, according to the latest press reports the Premier says, "The jobs are gone." What a fine thing to do: 40,000 jobs, like that. What a fine thing to do to the people who've supported you, not just with pounding the bricks for you during an election, but also contributing their money to the campaign chest. That's really astounding, but it's one more example of the piety of the New Democratic Party.

I'm surprised that there aren't New Democratic Party members ripping up their cards. I'm surprised they haven't waged a major campaign to destroy their cards in the New Democratic Party, saying: "We can't believe in these people any more. They're doing all sorts of things. They're demonstrating to us that they can't be believed."

1550

What is Bob Rae going to say in the next election campaign when he goes out on the campaign trail? Perhaps he should go now before he disillusions the party entirely. Perhaps he should call the election now, and then he could go out and try to explain, "Well, Sunday shopping, we were opposed to it; we wanted a common pause day."

The people would say, "Well, Bob, why did you do it?" "Well, it was popular; it was popular." "Well, Bob, why did you do casino gambling?" "Well, it was popular." It was also a way that the Treasurer, who is holding his breath, is expecting there's going to be a windfall from this endeavour and there probably will be. Unfortunately, it will be a windfall on the backs of the poor, on the backs of the people who will risk everything in the hopes of perhaps trying to salvage something from this province that's been decimated by the policies of this government.

They have not brought in one single piece of legislation or one piece of policy legislation that has recognized that you need to encourage business. You need to encourage small business particularly. In fact, by this Sunday shopping legislation the mom-and-pop stores are gone. How can they compete? I suppose what they'll do is they'll give them an alternative. They'll probably say to them, "Okay, how many slot machines would you like in your mom-and-pop store to compensate for the loss of business we've taken away by giving you wide-open Sunday shopping?"

There are communities, obviously, that do not wish to have wide-open Sunday shopping. The New Democratic Party, although it said there would be a common pause day and it's reneged on that, could have at least considered the question of the local option that our government provided.

Mr Mills: That was a disaster.

Mr Callahan: How do you know?

Mr Mills: It was. I was on council. I know.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Callahan: Give me a break. Yes, you didn't have the guts to take on the decision-making process. You let your people down. The member from Durham East says he was on council at the time. Well, obviously the reason he didn't want it was that he didn't have the guts to make decisions, and he's just joined a party that's formed a government that hasn't got the guts to make the decisions.

What they think is that the government can do everything. They think the government should run everything in the province. They don't believe anybody else has the capability of running anything in this province.

I have a lot of small stores in my riding, nice people eking out a livelihood. They have their kids working in there with them. They work long hours. They work from eight in the morning till midnight. Some of them work all night. What have they done? They haven't even asked them. They haven't even gone to them and said, "What impact is this going to have on your business?" They've just snuffed out those jobs. They've said, "Well, it's popular; that's why."

Well, it may be popular in Toronto. It may be popular in Peel county. I mean, we're a big city. But it's obviously not popular in smaller communities. They don't want their family life interfered with, thank you. You're interfering, with casino gambling, with wide-open Sunday shopping and Lord knows what else.

I think it's time that the members of the government, those people—I think there are truly good people over there who are really concerned about this. They feel somehow as though they've been—I don't want to use the word "raped," but assaulted, because they're being told in their caucus: "Well, just play along with us.

Vote with us because you have to vote with us. If you don't, the government might fall. Trust us."

Is that what the Premier is saying, and the other senior ministers? They're saying: "Trust us. We'll fix it all up. We may ruin the province with this casino gambling but we'll fix it up. We'll come up with some way to do it." Or have you got a social contract going with your caucus? There's got to be some way that these people are sitting on their principles, and none of them has the guts of the member from Victoria-Haliburton. He hasn't even left the party. All he's done is he's probably sacrificed the opportunity to ever get ahead in his own party while it's in government. But I'll tell you something: If I were his constituent and viewed that, I would say, "There's a man of principle."

The rest of them, you know, they play a good game. The member for Welland-Thorold speaks a good game about this. I haven't seen him move anyplace. He's prepared to support Sunday shopping, something his predecessor was vehemently against. In fact, the reason we travelled this province, quite frankly, was because Mel Swart was a fine man. He was a man of principle, and the net result of that was that we wanted to give Mr Swart an opportunity to hear from the public and to bring all the concerns before that committee so that a decision could be made. Mr Swart was a New Democratic Party member in the finest tradition.

His successor espouses a great game, claims that he's against Sunday shopping. I wonder if he talks to Mel. I wonder if Mel talks to him. If he wants to get his message across, the way to get his message across to this government is to walk over there or over there or over there and ask the Speaker to put his seat aside independently. He doesn't have to leave his party, but unless he does that, I think it tells the people who voted for him in Welland-Thorold: "You are not representing me. You are saying things and carrying on and getting lots of press as though you're opposing the government and you're not doing anything about it." I think the people of Welland-Thorold, in the next election, will understand that. I think they really would.

Mel Swart, a man of great integrity, has had some rather disparaging comments about the Premier, for the very reason that the Premier has gone back on his promises and he's the leader. He's the man everybody looks to as the Premier of this province to direct the public policy and the ship of state. I'll tell you, at the moment I think the ship of state has run out of wind. They're floating aimlessly. They're about to crash on the rocks. We would certainly like to give you a push over the rocks. I think the best way to avoid coming on the rocks right now is for members over there to get off their principles, assert your principles.

You were elected by the people of your riding, not by the Premier of this province. You owe your allegiance to those people. They pay your salaries. They're the

taxpayers. They're the people you have to go home and face every weekend in your constituencies. I wonder what they say to you, or do they even come see you? Maybe they don't come to see you any more. Maybe they say: "It's a waste of time to go see my local member, because he's just simply an extension of Bob Rae and those other four or five strong cabinet ministers who run the show. It won't do any good to go see him, because when vote time comes they stand up like they're joined at the hip."

Let me tell you, people have very long memories. I don't know about you, but my impression as I go around this province and talk to people is that they are mad. Their anger is turning somewhat into depression because they don't see any future on the horizon.

Look at young people this summer. Young people this summer will not have any jobs. It's as simple as that. What is this government doing to help those young people? Nothing.

Do you not care about the young people in this province? Do you not care that they're able to go back to the universities and the community colleges or back to whatever type of education they're taking? Does this government not have any compassion? Have they simply abandoned all their principles and they're totally devoid of any responsibility for this? Are you simply going to drive the ship on to the rocks and say goodbye because you know you have no chance of ever forming the government again? Is this what it's called? Is this the mindless direction of the ship of state?

Sunday shopping is something that can become very personal to individuals. It can become very different in various areas of Ontario. It can have an impact in Ontario on businesses in a different way. Some communities will love it. Some residents will love it. I'm sure the people out in Ontario probably think it's great.

As the member from Cambridge used to say at the justice committee hearings when we were going around with our bill, "You know, maybe the public likes it, but then, if the public had to work seven days a week or they had to work on that day that they could have with their family, they perhaps would think twice about it." I thought to myself that was a very genuine statement, yet here we are. The member from Cambridge, a fine gentleman, is simply ignoring it and going along with the herd; he's going along with the caucus. He's saying: "There may be a chance. I have to have party solidarity at all costs."

I suggest that if there's one thing about politics that makes it noble, it's the fact that you don't have to kowtow to the powers to be. Maybe you'll lose your extra emolument for your Chairman's job or your PA job, but your allegiance is owed to the people who voted for you. They gave you a sacred trust.

The Premier has abandoned that, so don't count on

him. He's broken so many promises I'm surprised the people of Ontario have not just sort of marched on Queen's Park to shout and shout and tell him that. I'm sure they do in many other ways. But you people have the power and this may be the only opportunity you'll ever get to have this power, because I suggest that a lot of you are going to be decimated in the next election. Here's your chance to speak out for those people in your community, the mom-and-pop stores, the young people, the people who are poor, the people who have drug and alcohol problems.

1600

Mr Perruzza: All the people you represent, right?

Mr Callahan: If I do, I'm proud to. The member in the New Democratic Party says those are the people I represent. We all represent an entire cross-section of Ontario, and if I do represent people like that, I'm proud of it. They're as important to me as any other people. If you don't have any, or you don't see them—perhaps you walk right by them. Perhaps he walks right by them and doesn't realize that what he's doing to his residents by not giving them a say in how Sunday shopping will be allocated in particular areas is in fact doing a disservice to his constituents.

I want to say finally, in the short time that's remaining, I'm hoping to see, and I think the public of Ontario is hoping to see, and the long, hot summer won't kill that thought in their minds, they're waiting to see the members that they voted for in the New Democratic Party to government get off their principles and do something dramatic to demonstrate that they in fact do not agree with the things that the Premier has tried to do, either unilaterally or in concert with maybe two or three of the major ministers. I'm waiting to see what's going to happen. I'm going to count. I'd be very disappointed, as I think your residents will be, if they find that the only person who has the guts to show what he believes in is the member for Victoria-Haliburton.

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): I listened with interest to the member from Brampton South when he talked about the local option and how this was an excellent way to go, that we should all consider the local option as the way to proceed on this item. Having been involved in a municipal council when this topic was being debated for many years, I must say I think that's about the worst possible option that could be before us. It's my sense that this issue needs to be determined on a provincial basis. It's my sense that either we go this route and allow open Sunday shopping or we close it down altogether; one or the other. Anything in between is simply a dog's breakfast.

I can tell you, in Metropolitan Toronto, and people from other places may have different views on this, but I was certainly approached by many merchants, many business people in Metropolitan Toronto, and their message was, if you open up Sunday shopping, let's say

in the city of Toronto, but you don't open it up in the city of North York, you're going to have a tremendous competitive disadvantage. Then you get involved in what's called the domino effect, because you can't allow that to happen. You can't allow the businesses, just a few kilometres apart, to be at a disadvantage. So what happens is that if it opens up in the city of Toronto, then other municipalities—East York, North York, Etobicoke, Mississauga—have no choice. They have no choice. They have to follow suit or else their merchants are at an extreme disadvantage.

So what it really boils down to is finding one municipality in an area and then building on that. It's the worst possible option, and I hope that we never go in that direction.

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): The honourable member Mr Callahan, the member for Brampton South, referred on several occasions to my participation in this issue and I thank him for that. The people in Cambridge are always delighted to know that their member is effective in speaking on the issues. But I do want to emphasize today the difference between a member of government and a member of opposition.

We have listened to a long opposition speech, and basically what the member did is he discounted the past. He's now a member of opposition and he is opposing opening up Sunday shopping. Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, there's not a person in the province of Ontario who doesn't realize that the Liberal administration that preceded this government wanted in fact to liberalize, to open up Sunday shopping, and that was the basic consequence of the local option, and now he opposes liberalizing of Sunday shopping.

What is the opposite situation for a member of government? There is no doubt that a change has taken place, but a government must be pragmatic. I think when you look at a government like this, a mature government, a government that says, "Things change, things are not just in the status quo"—you know, I go to the same coffee shops. I go to M&M, I go to Tim Horton's, I go to Dianna Restaurant, the same coffee shops, the same restaurants, the same senior homes, the same Legion halls, the same Newfoundland club, and I listen to the people. What they're telling me now is, "We support the direction of the government." What they may have told us five years ago, three years ago, certainly has changed, and when you have a government that's responsive and pragmatic, the government listens and the government acts.

Mr Perruzza: As I've said before, I'm going to be voting against this because I essentially campaigned against this and I feel in my heart of hearts that I couldn't support it. But what I can't stand is when I hear Conservatives, but primarily Liberals these days, who stand in their place and accuse us, accuse the NDP of all kinds of things. I have to tell you that sometimes

they drool, they foam at the mouth with accusations and insinuations. There's all kinds of innuendo, but my colleague from Cambridge said it best.

You know, when I was a municipal councillor and those guys, the Liberals, were in power, you couldn't figure out what end was up. You couldn't figure it out because none of us knew. You'd read the papers, you'd listen to the stuff, the dictates would come down, and what did they decide to do with this question? They passed the buck. They decided essentially: "We're not going to make the decision. Let somebody else do it."

They said, "In the city of Toronto, let Vaughan compete against North York, because Vaughan may take a position and North York may take a contrary position." If you live in Vaughan and you do business in Vaughan and you have a little shop, the little mom-and-pop shop that he professes to represent, you've got to be closed because that's it, he decided; they weren't going to let you open. But cross the street, cross Steeles and you can shop and you can let that little mom-and-pop shop put that other little mom-and-pop shop out of business. That's the people he professes to represent, and that irks me. It irks me because when I hear that foam-at-the-mouth babble, that foam-at-the-mouth hypocrisy. It just dumfounds me. You wish you had earphones in this place sometimes to be able to shut yourself off from it and say, "I don't want to listen to any of the foam-at-the-mouth babble because it absolutely is not true."

The Acting Speaker: I want to remind all members that they're bordering on unparliamentary language. The member for Durham East.

Mr Mills: I listened to the member for Brampton South with a great deal of interest and I must say that at times I got a little out of hand and I apologize for that. But nevertheless, as the parliamentary assistant to the minister, I have gone around and listened to more people's comments on Sunday shopping, so-called, than perhaps most people in this House. I have taken note of that.

I'd just like to remind the member for Brampton South what one of his own members said, the member for Scarborough North, Mr Curling. He said there are many other things, many issues that must be dealt with, that we'd like to move on. He's talking about Bill 118. He says: "Make a decision. Let's move on it. It will not be perfect." That's from his own caucus.

Then Mr Curling goes on: "Here is an opportunity, Mr Speaker, to say that you have listened." We did listen to the public. This is responsible government. We listened to the people, what they said. Seventy-two per cent of the people said that they want uninterrupted Sunday shopping, 24% of the people said that they want Sunday shopping on a regulated basis and only 5% of those people said that they didn't want Sunday shopping.

I just want to take you back through Hansard to Kingston. We had Mr Carr. He said: "We don't have time. Forget it. Will you politicians in Queen's Park"—this is municipal politicians telling us this—"make your decisions? We can't pass it on to another level of government. We're the last level of government." He's talking about us. "We can't palm tough decisions on another elected government. You were elected to make a decision. Make a decision." That's from the third party.

1610

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Brampton South has two minutes in response.

Mr Callahan: First I'd like to respond in a couple of words to the member from Cambridge. I never realized that "pragmatic" meant the same thing as "opportunistic," but from what he said, I think he's equated those two words. He said that this government was being pragmatic; I suggest this government is being opportunistic. It simply took polls. I just hope your polls are right and that you don't have to look at this about four or five years down the line and find that because you did it in a way that didn't give the people in the municipalities all over Ontario the opportunity to have their say, you destroyed the province.

I have to refer to the member from Downsview. I didn't realize he was voting against it. I applaud you for having the guts to do that. You have probably limited your career. You will never get into cabinet and I'm surprised you haven't lost your parliamentary assistant's job or your chairmanship, whatever you do, one or the other, because that seems to be the trend over here. If you do anything against the government, you lose those opportunities. But I applaud you for doing it.

The member from Durham East apologized. No need to apologize. What's said in this House, I mean every word of it, and if you disagree with me, that's your right. In fact, I wish you would disagree with a lot of the things that the government is doing today. Those things that you campaigned for and you believed in—and I know you're an honourable person—to be able to support those that are now being espoused by the Premier and those four or five cabinet ministers who are the power brokers in this place, and the fact that you can change the insurance bill—I'm sure Mel Swart is totally opposed to that—the fact that you can bring in casino gambling, which there's no question, Donald Trump—quite frankly, the guy who owns Trump's Castle in Atlantic City actually said you will have an increase in crime, you will have an increase in a whole host of problems. Where are all the opportunities for the public to air their views in that regard?

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I am pleased to rise today and talk briefly with regard to Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping.

I would sooner have been rising today speaking on the budget that this government presented a few weeks ago. I understand the debate will be very limited and there will not be much opportunity to debate that major budget. But today I welcome the opportunity to comment briefly on what has turned out to be an extremely controversial piece of legislation, Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping.

This bill was introduced and received first reading on June 3, 1992, which is a year ago today. Bill 38 enables retail business establishments to open on Sunday, with Easter Sunday and other holidays which fall on a Sunday remaining as retail business holidays. Because of the amendments set out in section 1 of the bill, section 4.4 of the act, which relates to Sunday openings in December, is unnecessary and is repealed, terms and leases requiring Sunday openings to be of no effect. And the amendments will be retroactive to June 3, 1992. That is when this bill was first introduced and received first reading.

It's also my understanding that retail workers are provided with the same protection as currently exists under the legislation or is present in the Employment Standards Act, such as: both full- and part-time retail workers will have the absolute right to refuse Sunday and holiday work; the worker who has agreed to work on a Sunday and wishes not to do so can refuse with 48 hours' notice; employees will be entitled to 36 continuous hours of rest in every seven days whether they work Sundays or not; and hospitality industry employees are exempt from these portions of the act.

As I noted earlier, Bill 38 has become an extremely controversial piece of legislation. I have received an incredible number of letters and petitions from across the riding of Simcoe East related to Bill 38. The constituents writing letters or signing petitions are either completely supportive of this legislation or completely opposed to it and the battle lines have been drawn and neither side appears willing to compromise.

I've presented petitions in the Legislature on behalf of churches in Orillia, Elmvale and Penetanguishene, just to name a few, but that were signed by hundreds of concerned constituents. They are opposed to wide-open Sunday shopping and the end of the common pause day. These petitions contain the same basic message, which is:

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our opposition to wide-open Sunday business. We believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life, and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardships on retailers, retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all

Sundays except Easter, 51 per year, from the definition of legal holiday and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

As I said earlier, these petitions were signed by hundreds of sincere, concerned residents from Orillia, Elmvale, Penetanguishene, Hawkestone, Coldwater, Severn Bridge, Brechin, Shanty Bay, Rugby, Warminster, Washago, Minesing, Phelpston, Perkinsfield, Hillsdale, and throughout the townships of Flos, Mara, Medonte, Orillia, Oro, Rama and Tiny, and even from Gingersnap Junction.

Clearly, their opposition to Bill 38 is obvious, as is the opposition of Mr C.W. Armstrong of Clagar Holdings Inc in Elmvale, who wrote to the Premier:

"When you people were considering and asking for advice in regards to Sunday shopping, it would be interesting to know how many who advocate Sunday shopping would be or are prepared to work on Sundays themselves. Do you really think those people who supposedly have the extra cash to spend have been hiding it in their socks waiting for Sunday openings? Are they kidding? Who's kidding who? Too bad. In the real world, it doesn't matter who does the math, you can't get 10 kilograms out of an 8-kilogram bag."

Heather and David Low of Orillia expressed their opposition to wide-open Sunday shopping when they wrote to the Premier and said:

"First, let us state clearly that we are strongly opposed to wide-open Sunday shopping. We feel it is appalling that corporations feel they can break the law by staying open on Sundays. What kind of example is that to our children and youth of Ontario? Maybe the law will change. We hope not. However, the opening of any of the large chains in particular at this point tells our young people that breaking the law is okay. Is it okay to break the law in this case? I think not. Let us keep a common pause day in Ontario. It will be good for us all."

Just as there are two sides to every story, there are two sets of opinions when it comes to the debate surrounding Bill 38. On wide-open Sunday shopping, there appears to be just as many people supporting Bill 38 as there are who oppose it.

Eighty-five-year-old Ann Hart of Orillia wrote to me and said:

"I used to think it was terrible to open stores on Sundays, but I have now changed my mind. There's no doubt the churches are against it, but I have faith in God and I believe good people can find the Lord in their own homes and be the first to help the young people who have to work to live. I hope I don't offend your views, but with so much unemployment one is obliged to do the right thing. I am 85 years old and I believe in our good Lord, but I still think our children need our help."

Another resident of Orillia, Mrs Muriel Wright, wrote me and said:

"I am a strong supporter of Sunday shopping in Orillia and trust that you will be able to support this view in the House. Orillia is a tourist area and our businesses need this support from our government. A Toronto-based group has no right to interfere in what is an Orillia decision to make."

Mr Tony Goepfrich is enjoying his retirement now, but when he was manager of the Zellers store in the County Fair Plaza in Orillia he wrote to me and said:

"Sunday openings were a great success for retailers, consumers, workers and the government. For retailers, it increased sales in an otherwise grim year; for consumers, it provided an added convenience; for workers, it provided increased employment and increased payrolls; and for the government, it provided a much-needed boost to retail sales tax revenue."

1620

"Sunday shopping made an important difference for the retail sector. The retailing sector in Canada is undergoing a profound transformation. With these changes, it is imperative that the Canadian retail sector position itself competitively. Sunday shopping, on a continuous basis, is one of the steps needed to achieve this. The federal government has recently announced its own initiatives designed to assist the Canadian retail sector. The provincial government now has the opportunity to act. Sunday openings will not cost the government or the taxpayer, and it will create additional employment."

In a news release, Mr Julian Huffer, president of the Huronia Tourism Association, announced that the Huronia Tourism Association has adopted the position, and I quote, "That it endorses the concept of free choice in the matter of Sunday openings." In supporting the free choice concept for Sunday openings, Mr Huffer indicated:

— Ontario as a whole is a tourist destination, not just arbitrarily designated areas.

— Being a multicultural province with a variety of religious beliefs, how can any one day be designated a common pause day?

— With the reimposition of Sunday closing, thousands of workers have lost their jobs or had them dramatically reduced.

— A common pause day is discriminatory and unacceptable since there are those who want to work but can't and those who must work even if they don't want to.

— Vocal groups, not always representing the majority, can politically intimidate local government bodies, especially in smaller population centres where fear of recrimination prevents many well-meaning people from speaking out.

— As in the 1950s, when Sunday sports, cinemas and liquor were suggested, there has been a hue and cry about the destruction of family life, whereas the province adopted these activities and life proceeded without the predicted dire consequences.

I trust my colleagues here in the Legislature agree that there is a great deal of conflict, controversy and differing opinions swirling around Bill 38. People either support it or they oppose it; there is no middle ground. Bob Rae said in the last campaign, or before the campaign, that a common pause day was the policy of the government. Workers wanted the Sunday off. I was with the committee when they travelled part of the province. All the unions that made presentations wanted Sundays off. Single parents want Sundays off. But young people, single people, want to work. So, as I said, there is a lot of controversy around this bill.

Because of this, I believe this piece of legislation should be sent to a standing committee for public hearings and then there should be a free vote in the Legislature where each and every member can accurately reflect the views and opinions and concerns of his or her constituents.

Mr Peter North (Elgin): I listened intently to the views and concerns that were raised by the member opposite and I feel very much that he has reflected the opinions of a cross-section of Ontario. This in fact is a very, very difficult bill. It's a very difficult issue, and it's something that the people of the province have needed to listen very closely to.

With our party, I find that this particular issue has a certain evolution to it and that in the context that we are in today, perhaps the shape or the issues around the issue have changed somewhat. It's been a very difficult process for members of all sides of the House to engage in this particular issue and to have discussions about this particular issue.

I know that during the time I was the Minister of Tourism and Recreation, I had a chance to listen to a number of different views on this particular issue. People gave all different types of impressions on how they felt about where we should be on this issue. Some felt very strongly that we needed to address the Sunday working; some felt very strongly that we needed to address it simply from an opportunity point of view. I find, in listening to the people, that there was a split, but the split was more directly influenced, in my mind, by the people that felt they should have the choice of working or shopping on Sunday.

One thing that I found very notable was the youth of the province and the opportunity they felt it presented to them. This particular issue of openings on Sunday they felt gave the youth of this province an opportunity for work, an opportunity they felt that may not be there particularly in times such as this, very, very difficult times, times that are very trying and not as great an

opportunity as there has been in the past.

I understand the member's point of view, I understand the conflict in his mind and I understand that it's a particular piece of legislation that will have a lot of discussion on both sides.

Mr McLean: I want to thank the member for Elgin for his comments. There's not much more that I can say other than to say that his remarks will be much the same as mine, and I know many members in this House feel the same way. It's a very controversial issue and it's not easy to deal with. That's why our party is allowing our members to have an open vote according to the wishes of our constituents, I think the majority of them, and that's not going to be easy to determine. It's a very tough position for everybody.

Mr David Winninger (London South): I too am pleased to join in this debate today. I realize that the issue of Sunday shopping has been an issue that has been around for a very long time and has bedevilled a whole series of governments.

Even though we no longer live in the Presbyterian Ontario of the 1800s, when streetcars were banned on Sundays and steamboat excursions and rail excursions were banned on Sundays, there is in fact still some attachment to the idea of a common pause day in Ontario, notwithstanding the fact that we've become a more pluralistic society over the years and over the generations. In fact, in my own riding of London South there are a large number of constituents who don't celebrate their Sabbath on Sunday. There still is a strong desire on the part of retail workers and small retailers and their families to enjoy a day on which they can relax and rejuvenate from the daily grind and commercialism of the week.

I don't believe that the issue of Sunday shopping is necessarily one only of Sunday shopping. It's also an issue concerning Sunday working. I was pleased with the introduction of Bill 115, which sought to ensure that a larger sector of Ontario does not have to work in order to provide shopping convenience for other sectors that are able to enjoy their common pause day. I know polls tend to show that a majority of Ontarians favour wide-open Sunday shopping, but I think if you asked some of these people polled whether they'd like to work on Sundays themselves, they're very apt to decline to work on Sundays.

I know for a fact that many retail workers in my riding want to be with their families on Sundays in the same way that their owners and their managers are with their families on Sundays. I still get calls regularly, virtually each week, from sales people at Patton's Place in my riding, a furniture retailer, many of whom are on commission and feel they can't really voluntarily decline to work on Sundays.

I also think of the plight of the small retailers in my

riding and across Ontario and the concern they have. Many of these are run by sole proprietors or are run by their families. These small retailers certainly don't have the same luxuries that larger businesses have to opt to stay open on Sundays and in fact may lose a considerable portion of their market share to the larger retailers.

1630

The larger retailers and the media certainly benefit from Sunday openings. The media benefit because of increased advertising sales and the larger retailers may benefit from the increased share of the market that they derive from Sunday openings.

I also question whether or not Sunday openings have generated more jobs, sales or tax revenues. For example, a Radio Shack store in my riding was open for a few Sundays after we permitted Sunday openings and closed down shortly afterwards, after testing the market for three or maybe four weeks. So we need to be concerned about the smaller retailers.

We also need to be concerned about protection for workers. Some workers maintain that they have suffered cutbacks in their hours due to the higher operating costs of opening on Sundays. They feel it's very difficult for them to complain if they're suspended or laid off or disciplined. They feel there's a level of intimidation and coercion.

In fact, in the report to the Minister of Labour from the committee to advise on the impact of Sunday shopping, presented in February of this year, many of these workers indicated that the choice whether or not to accept Sunday work is not truly voluntary in many circumstances due to peer pressure from other workers, the fear that the employer or the supervisor will look unfavourably upon you when it comes time for a promotion because you are not a team player, or the pressure from an employer who says that the store will be in financial danger if it does not open with adequate staff. It may be financial pressure on the workers, knowing, if they're on commission for example, that they'll face lower income and lost sales if they forego Sunday work.

With Sunday openings, some of these workers indicate, especially in the grocery business, that these stores are seeing some of their sales shift from other days to Sunday. As a result, the hours of opening and number of staff may be cut back on other days during the week.

There were a number of very positive suggestions made in the advisory committee report, including posting of notices as to workers' rights, prohibiting employers from asking questions about Sunday work availability on application forms and various other very constructive suggestions that might offer greater protection to workers than is presently the case.

I would also like to see some attention directed to the

needs of workers required to work on Sunday with regard to transportation, getting to and from work, and with regard to child care for those single parents who may feel obliged to work on Sundays.

Some would argue that no worker has to work on Sunday, and if you read the strict text of the Employment Standards Act, that may be the case. A worker who is terminated for ulterior reasons or who is disciplined can file a complaint, but of course it takes some time for that complaint to be dealt with.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I find it incorrect that we don't have a quorum present when we're debating something that this government campaigned against in the last election and now is doubling back on. Surely, the members should be here to hear this.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have a quorum?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The member for London South may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Winninger: I'm also cognizant of the concerns expressed by the United Food and Commercial Workers, which indicate that retail workers are relatively under-organized and underpaid, and that the service they provide imposes social burdens on them which have to be addressed.

I'm mindful that as recently as May 1992 a resolution was adopted by our party reaffirming its support for the current common pause day legislation and enforcement of same. So in light of the fact that there's no demonstrable proof that Sunday openings have led to increased sales, and in fact my suspicion is that we have the same sales and the same revenues spread over seven days instead of six with potentially greater costs, certainly for small retailers and family businesses, mom-and-pop operations, and due to the fact that many of these mom-and-pop operations are small convenience stores that are being forced out by the ever-growing market share that larger grocery stores are able to command, I'm not even sure if there's a potential for more jobs as a result of Sunday openings.

I'm also concerned, as I said earlier, that retail workers may not enjoy the protections they really need to be able to exercise a meaningful right to refuse to work on Sundays. I realize the Employment Standards Act may vouchsafe to retail workers 36 hours of continuous rest every seven days, but the kind of implied and subtle coercion, if you will, that exists in some of these retail outlets can certainly infringe on the rights of workers and not give true meaning to the protection we're all seeking to afford to them.

I realize there may be a growing demand for Sunday openings. I realize that the fabric of Ontario has changed over the generations, and because of our more

pluralistic nature, Sunday does not command perhaps the same attention it once did. We do need to enjoy a common pause day when personal and community life can be reaffirmed, and I think that's a long-standing tradition of this party that needs to be articulated from time to time.

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): I would support the member from London South's statement. I found out, as I went through my riding of Muskoka-Georgian Bay, that 60% to 85% of the people in every community were opposed to wide-open Sunday shopping, and I'm not talking only of the general public. We went into every store on our main streets. We talked to the people who owned the stores and found out that indeed the independent store owners, from grocery stores on down through to the smallest independent on the main streets of our towns, 60% to 85% of those people were opposed to it. After all, under wide-open Sunday shopping, we're going to be forcing these people to work seven days a week, some of them.

When I look at it, yes, in my area we have a bit of a conflict. The resort industry would like to see Sunday shopping, but indeed, is it fair to force that on the small independent or even the large independent merchant within the community? That's what this does. Already I'm hearing from people that they're being told, "If you don't work Sunday, your hours are going to be cut back," and that, sir, is forcing people to work on Sundays and that was one of the things I thought was not going to happen under wide-open Sunday shopping. It's already happening out there in the community, so therefore I support the statements made by my colleague from London South.

1640

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): I concur with some of the comments by the member, certainly his concern for small business operators who do want a day off and who labour very hard six and seven days of the week. One of them in my riding is Mr Matthews of Drummond Home Hardware on Drummond Road, who has been in contact with me in the last few years. Also, my own father operated a jewellery store. I know he worked very long hours and needed Sunday off.

But I think two things are very clear now: First, shoppers want that choice and, second, the retailers and the tourism operators across Ontario—every retailer, I think—want that choice. We have now, over the past year, given them that opportunity and that choice. I feel now that if we vote against this, it's like trying to go back in time when we have operated under this system for the last year and I believe our society has not fallen apart.

I want to add one other thing, that in my own riding of Niagara Falls people are desperate for jobs. They want any job, and in this economy, if we can provide

students and/or other people with that opportunity, I think we should.

The Acting Speaker: The member for London South has two minutes in response.

Mr Winninger: I certainly appreciated the comments of my colleagues from Muskoka-Georgian Bay and Niagara Falls.

I think it's important to remind the House that the divergence of opinion you hear expressed today indicates that this government doesn't necessarily all sing from the same hymn book or read from the same prayer book on the issue of Sunday shopping. Those in the opposition who suggest that members of this House are not free to express their opinions ought to remember this day and this debate, which is a fine example of the flexibility shown by this government in allowing its members not only the privilege of speaking their frank opinions with regard to this vexing issue but also to exercise a free vote if they so choose.

I think we also should remind ourselves that under Bill 114, and also under Bill 115, there were many businesses exempted that offered the kinds of commodities that people would require on a Sunday, including food, entertainment and various other amenities that the consumer might seek.

As well, both Bill 114 and Bill 115, perhaps in their own way, with some difficulties, attempted to promote tourism in Ontario, either through the municipal option or through province-wide criteria. I think people who say there's no choice if we don't proceed with this legislation ought to be reminded that there was choice under the previous acts.

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): With your permission, Mr Speaker, I will address myself in the half-hour that is allocated to me today not so much to the government members or even to members of my own caucus or the third party, because I understand and I realize that the bill will pass, that the government has decreed to change its position and to move forward with it; however, I do want to address myself to the people who may be watching out there in the public, because ultimately it will be the people who still will make or break what, in my opinion, Sunday stands for and what Sunday means and a position that I will be speaking on and that will lead me to vote against the bill that's before us.

But before I go into this detail, I have brought something that I bought not far from here. I'm sure you immediately recognize what this is.

Mr Mills: What is it?

Mr Daigeler: It's a rose. I invite you, Mr Speaker, I invite those on the other side of the House, I invite those who are watching, to think for a moment, what is a rose? What comes to your mind when you see this flower?

Mr Mills: The old country.

Mr Daigeler: To me, immediately I think, something special. It's different.

Hon Richard Allen (Minister without Portfolio in Economic Development and Trade): My wife.

Mr Daigeler: The former Minister of Colleges and Universities is saying he's thinking of his wife. The member for Durham East is thinking of the old country. So immediately something is coming to our minds. It's special, it's different.

It is different, it's special, because I think there's a lot of beauty to a rose. Look at the flower. Look at the colour that is there. Look at the delicate arrangement of the petals that are around. In fact, smell. It has a beautiful fragrance. And as the member for Hamilton West said, because he was referring to his wife, a rose is also a sign of love. It's a sign of community.

Mr Mills: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I'm not opposed to the member personally, but I believe our standing orders do state that you're not allowed to use items or objects to make your speech flowery. I think that the member is making his speech very flowery by the use of this flower. I think we should stick to the bill, Bill 38.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Durham East does bring a point of order to the attention of the Speaker. Indeed, props are not considered to be parliamentary.

Mr Daigeler: Mr Speaker, with your permission, I think it is possible to bring a rose into this chamber.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): We want to know where you bought that rose.

Mr Daigeler: I obviously have caught their attention, so obviously it is working. If he will only permit me for a few more minutes to think what this rose represents, then I will explain to him where the connection is with the bill before us and with Sunday.

As the previous Minister of Colleges and Universities, the member for Hamilton West, said, this rose is a sign of community. It's a sign of love. It's a sign of bonding. However, at the same time, when you think about a rose, you have to take the time. I would ask the member from Durham East not to rush. Take the time. Think about the flower. Think about what a rose means. Take the time. Yes, there's a cost associated with it, and that's another point I want you to remember. There's a cost associated with a rose.

Finally, I say, why did I bring the rose? I could have brought another flower. Yes, that's true. There are other flowers out there that are beautiful, but most people—I got an immediate reaction from you—will be able to associate with a rose. They know this is a sign of love, a sign of friendship. They recognize the beauty in a rose. In fact, this recognition goes not just in this chamber; it goes across cultures.

Finally, what it does take, however, for a rose in order to grow and to be appreciated—

Mr Perruzza: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I really appreciate the fact that I'm hearing a sermon intended for a Sunday on a late Thursday afternoon. I like it.

The Acting Speaker: That's not a point of order.

Mr Daigeler: I would appreciate if the members would have the courtesy to not interrupt me constantly, because what I'm trying to make here are, in my opinion, some very important points that are very important. I would have thought that members of the NDP would take the time to reflect on what they're passing and what they're doing. This is the purpose of my speech this afternoon: if you just take the time to realize what a rose means and what Sunday means.

1650

My final point was that a rose needs care; it needs protection; it needs trimming. There's a lot of work, there's a lot of care, there's a lot of attention that goes into the cultivation of a rose.

Now, for all those rushing members over here who didn't want to take the time to look at the rose and make the connection with Sunday, I'm coming there. But before I come there, I just want to make one point. As I will use these six points that I was describing the rose, I will use these six points to describe Sunday.

I want to tell you that other than the governing party, there's some consistency in my own position because I have in front of me here an article of the—guess what?—Toronto Star, dated December 5, 1987. This seems like a long time ago; it's actually six years. Guess what it says? I'm quoting here from the column by Rosemary Spiers, who used to write for the Toronto Star.

She said, "The issue of Sunday shopping went suddenly to cabinet last Tuesday and last Tuesday to the Liberal caucus." She went on to say—frankly, I think she had some good moles there; I still don't know who provided her that observation, but anyway she apparently found out—"Only a few Liberal members objected, such as Hans Daigeler from Nepean."

So I've had a consistency on this matter and I'm very pleased that I finally do get an opportunity to put my viewpoint on the record and to speak, while I realize, as I said at the beginning, that the matter pretty well has been decided, to at least indicate, to give an opportunity to the members opposite and to the people out there to reflect on what we're doing and perhaps to do what I would like them to do: appreciate the roses and appreciate what Sunday means.

First of all, I said a rose is different; it stands out; it's special. I think that's what Sunday is as well. It's something special. It's different from the other days of the week. It's unique, it has a special character, it stands

out and, frankly, it makes life more interesting.

It's like spice. It's agreed you don't necessarily need spice—you need food—but it adds a flavour. It makes it different. It makes it more fun. In my opinion, that's what a Sunday is. It's different. It's like a rose. You don't need a rose, you have other flowers, but it adds a special characteristic, it adds a special flavour to our life.

Then I said a rose is something very beautiful. It has many aspects to it. It has colour. It has fragrance. It has smell. I said it has form in its shape. It has grace. The same thing can happen on Sundays. It's an opportunity to enjoy the beauties of the world of nature. We go out there and observe what the world is around us. It gives an opportunity to enjoy also the beauties that people have created, men and women: art, pictures, museums, literature, books, whatever it is.

It's a day where we can rest and enjoy and appreciate the beauty that is out there; frankly, it's also a day where we can just relax and sit back and do nothing. Again, for me that adds to the beauty and the richness of life of all of us.

A third point, and I think a very important one: I said the rose is a sign of love, is a sign of community, is a sign of friendship. Again, that's what Sunday is all about. It's an opportunity to get together, to renew friendships, to visit neighbours and, yes, for some people to go to church and establish community there.

But I don't think you have to be a churchgoer to appreciate and recognize the importance and usefulness of cultivating, of working on friendships and relationships and community and building your family, your friends, and making sure that you can enjoy and appreciate what the other people are: not just what you are yourself, but what the other people are.

To me, frankly, like with the rose, it's a very important aspect of life that we have symbols, that we have occasions, specific occasions, specific symbols, that represent more than just myself as an individual, that remind us of our community of being men and women, because, you know, the rose is a sign especially of the relationship between men and women.

I think Sunday too can be an occasion where men and women meet each other; again, where all these pressures during the week—and again, the member from Hamilton West said he was thinking of his wife. Yes, Sunday also can give us an opportunity. I speak about myself because I'm down here so often at Queen's Park. I'm not back in my riding. I'm not back with my family. I'm not back with my wife. It gives an opportunity on Sundays to renew that relationship of love.

If that opportunity is taken away, are we taking away a very important opportunity to renew friendship, to rebuild community and to strengthen love? Frankly, that is my point. That was my point when I was using that

example and that beautiful flower of the rose to indicate what's so important about Sundays.

Now, what was my fourth point? My fourth point about the rose—

Mr Mills: I have a garden full of them.

Mr Daigeler: —was that, yes, you do have to take the time to reflect about the rose. You can't, like the member from Durham East was trying to do with me, rush it. You have to pay attention. You have to take a close look. You have to go close and smell. You can't just do all kinds of other things. There is a cost associated with Sunday and with the enjoyment and the beauty of Sunday.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The member for Halton Centre—

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): Halton North.

The Acting Speaker: —on a point of order.

Mr Duignan: I wish to draw the member's attention to the fact, and I really do hate to interrupt the flowery speech the member has, but we sent a glass of water over so he could put the rose in it, so it would be well to allow the hot air that's sort of emanating from over there—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. That's not a point of anything. The honourable member for Nepean.

1700

Mr Daigeler: Thank you very much. At least you gave me an opportunity to drink a glass of water. However, I do hope that those people who are watching out there are not disrupted in their train of thought about what is, in my opinion, an extremely important aspect of our social life, and I would hope that the member opposite would take a moment to—

Mr Farnan: To smell the roses.

Mr Daigeler: Yes, as the member from Cambridge said, precisely, and that's where I want to end up, and I'm very pleased that in fact it is working: We should take the time to smell the roses. Now, what does that mean? I will come to that very shortly.

First, however, before you in fact can smell the roses, there is a cost associated with it. Yes, if you take the time to enjoy nature, to enjoy the beauties of the world, yes, you can't go out shopping. I understand that, and sometimes when you're working all week—and unfortunately too many people are caught up because they have to work so hard—the only time left seems to be for shopping on Sunday.

But is that convenience really worth it? I recognize, I appreciate the fact that not shopping on Sunday can be an inconvenience. I don't deny that. But as was mentioned by several other members, there is a cost for shopping, for having the stores open, on others. There's all the workers, who are often forced, as was mentioned already, to work. There's a cost for those people.

But my main point here is that Sundays do not necessarily come natural. We have to take the time to reflect on it and step back and make a conscious decision: "Yes, I want to do it differently. I don't want to get caught up in the flood of things. I want to step back and take the time to look closely at what I'm doing, to take the time to look at the flower and realize that Sunday's something special, at least different, that there's a lot of beauty that this day can offer to me."

My fifth point about the rose was why—

Mr Mills: This is like a sermon.

Mr Daigeler: The member from Durham East is saying this is like a sermon. Yes, frankly, I admit there is an element of sermon here, and I don't want to deny that I have a background in theology. I studied theology and I am coming in that sense from a spiritual basis. But some people understand this as narrowly religious. I don't agree with this. I do think what we're talking about here are some very basic values in society that I call—yes, I don't deny that. I call that spiritual. I may call that religious.

But I think there are some very basic cultural values at stake here, which frankly the NDP used to speak about. I was with the member from Durham East on the committee, and they were the ones who used to talk about the important values that are at stake with this legislation.

So, yes, the member from Durham East is correct: It is a bit of a sermon. But in my opinion, it is a reflection that hopefully many of us would make, because I think it's worthwhile, not because I want you so or somebody tells you that's what you have to do, because I think there's a lot to be gained for you and for all of us by taking the time to think about it and, in my opinion, by keeping Sunday the way it used to be. So that is my main point.

But, again, yes, why Sundays? Frankly, I think that's a very good argument. I said, why a rose? Why did I bring in a rose? It is true I could have brought in other flowers. There are some other very beautiful flowers, and certainly Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday are nice days of the week too, and I think it's possible to do what I was saying, to enjoy the beauties of life is possible on another day as well. The member from Durham East was talking about his country. He wasn't born in Canada. I wasn't born in Canada. But immediately, from another country, he recognizes what a rose means. I recognize what a rose means. Others from other cultures recognize it as well.

I think that's what is happening with Sundays as well. We can come or we have come, the world over, to an agreement that yes, Sunday is that day where we want to take the time to build community, see nature, enjoy the world and, as was said, smell the roses, enjoy, appreciate, see the beauty that is still there in the world.

That goes far beyond the achievement of work and that rat race we're all involved in.

I grew up basically in the 1960s. I was born before the 1960s, but my conscious age began with, I guess, the late 1950s and the 1960s. If you remember the promises that were made then, it was the leisure society that was supposed to come.

Mr Mills: Flower child.

Mr Daigeler: It was the flower generation, yes.

Mr Duignan: Do you remember San Francisco?

Mr Daigeler: Precisely, and frankly I think they were on to something. We have lost an aspect of the flower people from San Francisco, as the member from Durham East mentions. They were on to something. Obviously, they got sidetracked a little bit as well.

But I think the point here that I'm making is that by this measure that the government has put forward before us, in my opinion, we're losing out on something that could be important for us. I am not ideological enough to say, "This going to be the end of us." No, it won't be the end of the family. We're all resilient enough. We will continue to enjoy life and we will continue to see beauty. But I do think that more and more the pressures on us are such that we no longer see the beauty of a rose, that we no longer have the time to enjoy life, to be just ourselves, to be what we are and to do less. There's a time for doing, yes, and for me that would be during the week, and there's a time for being and for enjoying life.

My final point that I had made about the rose is that the rose, in order to grow and to be what it is, needs protection. It needs care. It needs cultivation. It needs a lot of work. The same point applies to Sunday. It needs care. It needs protection. For me, that is what the Sunday shopping law was all about. It was that framework that asked all of us to take the time to sit back, to enjoy life and to see the beauties.

It's that protection that we're taking away with this particular bill. As I say, I think that's unfortunate. I think it makes us less human. I don't think it makes us unhuman, but there is an element, a richness to a day of special attention.

It's like with the rose. There's a richness to a rose that we don't find in other flowers, but if we take the time to look at it, if we take the time on Sundays to enjoy the beauties of nature, to enjoy friendships, to rebuild families, I think then we will understand what I mean when I say I'm afraid that with all this shopping craze, we're losing something in our humanity. That's why, on the deepest level, I'm opposed to this. I have been opposed to it, as I indicated earlier, from the very beginning when this was first announced.

1710

Let me perhaps conclude with the advice that I would like to leave with the members opposite and that I

would like to leave with the members of the public. Frankly, the member for Cambridge already, on his own, arrived at the same advice and that advice is, take the time to smell the roses and take the time to enjoy Sundays and at least, if it's not going to be Sundays, don't forget to smell the roses. Don't forget to enjoy life and that there's more to life than work and making money.

If that's something I have done this afternoon it is that, when you see a rose, I hope you'll think of Sundays. And when you think of Sundays, remember the roses and remember to smell the roses. Remember to be human and remember your fellow human being and remember that there's more to life than making money and more to life than work.

Mr Mills: I've listened to the member for Nepean and I'd just like to tell him, and he knows this already, that Sunday to me is also a very special day. In fact, unless I'm ill, I'm always in Courtice United Church regularly of a Sunday, without fail, and being brought up in the old country where we mostly worked seven days a week, Sunday to me was also a very special day. Sunday, to me, is still a very special day.

But the population has spoken, the people of Ontario have spoken and they want to shop on Sunday. I don't think I have a right as a legislator to put my values on the line and say, "Well, I don't believe you should do this, that you shouldn't shop on Sunday because it's a special day."

I have lots of roses in my garden and I spend lots of time smelling them. I don't mind telling you, they're a very special flower to me, but let's look back at the history of where we've come. We're now in 1993. I look back and I see in 1883, 100 years ago, the Presbyterian Church lobbied about the use of streetcars in the cities. They stopped streetcars running. That wasn't very forward thinking, because in those days not many people had cars, and how the dickens were they going to get to the Presbyterian church? But they stopped people travelling. That was in 1883.

We jump forward to 1943. In those days, the cinemas in Toronto were only open if you were a soldier. If you had a uniform on you could go to the movies. Let's jump forward to 1950. Then there was a referendum that allowed people to watch Sunday sports. And this is a killer: In 1960, the Attorney General then, Kelso Roberts, sitting over there, in what was the government then, said he would no longer consent to prosecute people who operated coin laundries.

Mr Speaker, with deference to you, sir, with 1993, attitudes have changed, but personally—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member's time has expired.

Mr Mills: I know, Mr Speaker—it's up to us to conduct our lives accordingly.

The Speaker: The member for Nepean has up to two minutes for his response.

Mr Daigeler: The member for Durham East, whom I respect and we have other opportunities to talk to each other, raises an important point and I agree with him. What right do I have to impose my values? What rights do you have to impose your values? As I think I made clear, I wasn't trying to impose values. As I said, ultimately the protection of Sunday and the law for Sunday will only stand if the people themselves see that special day as important, as necessary and see the protection is necessary.

However, I did ask my own constituents, I did ask the people in my riding. I can tell you certainly that when this was first announced it was very clearly against Sunday shopping. I did a survey last year and there has been a change, as the NDP has indicated. There's more support for Sunday shopping now. However, in my own riding it was exactly 50-50. So 50% said, "Yes, we're in favour of opening Sundays," and 50% said, "No, we don't."

I certainly take that as good authorization for me to make a decision in this House according to my own best conscience. However, I should indicate to you that there are times where I feel the obligation and where I think I have the right—that's why we are in a representative democracy, that sometimes I will be able to put forward viewpoints, and justify them hopefully, that may not fully agree with the views of my constituents. I know I have done that, for example, on the Meech Lake debate. The electorate has the right and the opportunity, frankly, to express their agreement or disagreement when the election time comes and I'm fully conscious of that. However, on this one, I actually asked my voters and they were split on it.

Mr Turnbull: I'm particularly pleased to speak to this bill today. I will start by making the comment that one of the NDP's principal platforms in the last election, not just sort of an aside but one of their principal platforms, was that they believed Sunday shopping was evil.

I will say from the outset, so that anybody watching this or listening in the Legislature has no doubt, I will be voting against this bill. The reason is because I, like the NDP, ran in the last election on a platform that I was against Sunday shopping.

When we consider the amount of cynicism that exists for politicians today, I would just like to read something from that famous document, Agenda for People, that was put out by the NDP during the last election. This is dated August 19 under the heading of "Bob Rae, Leader of the Official Opposition."

I quote: "Men and women across Ontario have told me that they don't want promises that can't be kept and they don't trust parties that pretend to serve every need

and satisfy every demand. That's the cynical way of the Liberals, that's the cynical way of governments in Ontario and Ottawa today. New Democrats offer a different approach. We acknowledge that our Agenda for People will not meet every need. We can't satisfy every demand."

That statement by itself was not unreasonable because that was a reflection of how people were feeling about governments, but unfortunately that attitude still exists today and it's fuelled by this government's flip-flop, not on, as I say, an issue that was just by the way. This was one of the main planks of your election platform.

I made a commitment to the people of York Mills. When people asked me during the election, "Where do you stand on Sunday shopping?" I told them I'm unequivocally against Sunday shopping. I can tell you there were some people that this did not sit particularly well with, but I was upfront with them, I told them that and I'm sticking with it.

However, it is perfectly reasonable with the passage of time for opinions to change, but I really believe that we have an opportunity here which would get the NDP out of its present problems both on Sunday shopping and on casinos, if you want to change your mind, given the fact that you campaigned so vociferously against these issues in opposition. The solution to that is my private member's bill which I introduced in the last session to allow for citizen-initiated referenda and also to allow the government to put referendum questions. These would not be questions that would cost the public purse a lot of money, because they would not be freestanding referendums; they would be referendums that would be held at the time of a provincial election.

The government at any time could decide that there was a question which was so pressing that it was worthwhile asking the people, and these are the kind of questions, quite frankly, on Sunday shopping that should cut right across party lines. It should not be a political issue. It should be a matter of conscience and a matter of what the electorate wants.

1720

If we were to have a referendum at the time of the next election and the majority of people in Ontario said, yes, they wanted Sunday shopping—it may quite well be the case—I would certainly abide by the feelings of the electorate. That would be perfectly reasonable for me to change my mind at that time. However, that is not the route the government is taking.

This is exactly one year to the day that the government came forward and said it was going to allow wide-open Sunday shopping. In the interim we have had shops that have been operating outside of the confines of the law but with the assurance from the government that the government wouldn't prosecute anybody who was open. Well, given the fact that we've been able to operate for one year outside of the law, I don't see why

you couldn't wait until the next election, which as far as I'm concerned can't come soon enough. It would certainly get you out of your present difficulties.

I know that many of you have spoken and said that you will be voting against this bill. Indeed, on all sides of the House, in all parties, people have spoken both for and against Sunday shopping. This is a way of making reference to the people about a question which it's perfectly reasonable for you to make reference to them.

The response to the voters should be, "We want direction," but you're not prepared to do that. This is what fuels the cynicism, the fact that you went out and you constantly said: "We will have a different way. We will be different. We will listen to you. We will have a more open government." None of those things has occurred.

In fact today we should basically be debating the budget bill. You brought down a budget which is the largest tax grab in provincial history—\$2 billion. The public will begin to start to understand how serious it is when they get their paycheques next month and see the amount that you have taken out of the economy, which will have serious repercussions. We will lose 50,000 jobs according to the Conference Board of Canada as a result of your budget, because for every \$40,000 of tax increases you lose one job. Therefore, \$2 billion means you will lose 50,000 jobs as a result of this budget.

But, no, we're not getting an opportunity to debate the budget. We're debating Sunday shopping, which has been floating around for a year, but you're bringing it now. It's so important that you bring it now when we should be having a debate on the budget.

There is no doubt that people have every right to be cynical when you do these kinds of tricks. You've taken this huge budget grab. Take the heat now. If you bring it in, at least stand up and defend it. You're not prepared to do that. Instead, you're bringing in a bill for something that you announced exactly one year ago. Where is that commitment to open government which we heard from Mr Rae when you took office?

I want to just talk about the question of protection of workers. This government in opposition certainly was saying that there was no way you could protect employees. My colleague Mr Stockwell read in extensively from Hansard from when Mr Rae was in opposition about how you couldn't possibly protect workers. I won't read that in again, but I will reflect on the fact that it was your party that always said you would protect workers.

Let me tell you something. There has been nothing that has happened to protect workers in the meantime. If you think that you can protect workers with this kind of legislation by saying, "Oh, we'll wave the wand and say that an employer can't discriminate against you," you are dreaming. If somebody is coming to be hired

and the employer gets an idea that they're not going to work on Sunday, they won't get the job. And of the existing employees, if they refuse to work on Sunday, they're not going to get sacked, they just won't get a promotion.

Mr Mills: Are you voting on this or not?

Mr Turnbull: I've already said, Mr Mills, that I'm against it, very clearly, if you would pay attention. I'm not doing a flip-flop, unlike you.

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): You've had three different positions on this, for heaven's sake. Your party has had three different positions on it.

Mr Turnbull: Very curious that one of the ministers is heckling that we've got three different positions. I will point out to the minister that in point of fact, our party has always allowed a free vote on this and there has never been any doubt whatsoever that our party would let people vote with their consciences. I know the pressures that are going on in your party at the moment to get people to vote along with the government.

We know that you cannot protect workers, and the unions know that you cannot protect workers. You cannot also protect tenants in malls. Any suggestion of that, they say, "Oh, we will not allow a landlord to push you out because you're not opening on Sundays." What a naïve comment. It shows that you don't understand basically how business works.

The fact is that come lease renewal time, if the economy has improved and there is a shortage of shopping space, which may be some length of time before that occurs again, they just won't get the lease renewal on the terms that they want. So much for your protection of workers. So much for your protection of landlords. If you're honest with yourselves, you will know that what I speak is the truth.

Let us just talk about the question of a common pause day. It has great merit. There is no evidence that, in any society in the world where they have gone to seven-day shopping, that society has been kinder or gentler. It has invariably become more ugly and more grasping and meaner. I have not heard any evidence from any of the members across the floor to refute that.

The real question that has to be asked when you're talking about Sunday shopping is not whether people want Sunday shopping, but whether they are prepared to work on a Sunday, and there is a vast difference. Those people who may say, "Yes, I kind of like Sunday shopping," if they are office workers or steelworkers or auto workers, or indeed MPPs, should be asked the same question: "If you approve this, will you work on Sunday?"

Mr Mills: I worked on Sundays right here, on committee. On committee every week I worked on Sundays.

Mr Turnbull: The member for Durham East is screaming across the floor, in his usual hyena fashion, that he'd work on Sunday. Well, I'll tell you, I've worked a lot more Sundays in my life than most of the people on the other side of the floor put together.

Mr Mills: I have worked more Sundays than you have ever lived.

Mr Turnbull: So the real question is, will the people work on Sunday?

Mr Mills: You don't know what it is to work on a Sunday. I have worked on more Sundays than you have lived on this earth.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Durham East, please come to order.

Mr Turnbull: The answer, I believe, is in fact that they won't work on Sunday, and on that basis I oppose this legislation too.

Interjections.

Mr Turnbull: I've had an accusation, Mr Speaker, by the member for Durham East that I'm arrogant. It's very awkward when I speak the truth, isn't it, Mr Mills, because the fact is, I'm talking about you—

Mr Mills: I have worked more Sundays than you ever have.

The Speaker: Just a minute. Will the member for Durham East please take his seat.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Just relax. And the member for York Mills, would he please take his seat as well.

Mr Turnbull: You are sanctimonious.

The Speaker: I would ask the members to just turn down the temperature a little bit. It may be of assistance to the member for York Mills if he would direct his comments to the Chair, and if the member for Durham East would just relax.

Mr Mills: Yes, Mr Speaker. I apologize.

Mr Turnbull: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It rather hurts when somebody is speaking about the electoral record of this government, but it is the truth, and every word I have said so far is the truth and I can back it up.

Let us just look at the impact on business. We know that the impact on business is quite significant.

This is a summary of the impact on small convenience stores. From June 7, 1992, to September 30, 1992, the members of the Ontario Convenience Stores Association reported that they lost \$59 million in total sales. Convenience stores lost \$12,000 each per month for the months of June, July, August and September.

1730

Those convenience stores, to a great extent, are the stores which allow people who've recently immigrated to this country to be gainfully employed and integrate into our society. Often their language skills are not the

greatest and they manage to make their way without any handouts from the government. Instead, the government is going to drive them out of business. To date, just within this survey period, there were 2,000 stores closed and thousands of jobs lost. Can you imagine that kind of impact? That's as a direct result, according to their own association, of wide-open Sunday shopping.

Let's talk about cross-border shopping, because one of the reasons the government said it was bringing this in was to halt cross-border shopping. Indeed, I guess you could say cross-border shopping has gone since we've had wide-open Sunday shopping. However, let's examine why people go across the border. Overwhelmingly, the reason people go across the border is to be able to buy goods with less tax than they pay here in Ontario. Some of the taxes, we all agree, are fair. There has been general acceptance by all parties in this Legislature that heavy taxes on alcohol and tobacco are a way of paying back for the social ills that they cause and for paying for a lot of our medicare, which we hold so dearly and which we would not like to see moving into the model of the US.

That is one of the problems we have. It appears with cigarettes that we've actually crossed that Rubicon, that we now have taxation at such a high level that people have decided they're going to buy illegal cigarettes. It's estimated that one third of all the cigarettes sold in Canada today are smuggled cigarettes. That is a serious question and it's a question this government has to come to grips with. Are you going to continue to tax to the level that you start seeing diminishing returns? That's a question for another day, but it is a serious question. That's the greatest reason people go cross-border shopping.

Also, people like to go for the trip across the border. I suspect that even if prices were approximately the same, we would get an element of cross-border shopping. But they're not. We know that taxes are too high in Canada and we must address that. But opening shops on Sunday here is not addressing that. We're just sticking our heads in the sand.

The opening of stores in Ontario has resulted in fact, according to all the store owners whom I have spoken to, in a redistribution of the sales. They haven't increased sales, by and large. They have just redistributed them over seven days. As we redistribute those sales over seven days, we know that the cost of labour goes up. Eventually, if this recession ends, once again, we will see it reflected in higher prices, because if your costs go up in operating the store seven days and yet your sales haven't gone up, therefore there will be much less profit. We know there are many stores in Ontario that are not making any profit today. They've got losses and we've seen significant bankruptcies in stores since we've had Sunday shopping.

But it's not all because of Sunday shopping. It's

because of our uncompetitive situation and the fact that there's a lack of confidence in this province, to a great extent because of the actions of this government, but not entirely this government. I'm not one who would blame everything on one government. I think we've got a cumulative effect of many administrations at different levels thinking that there was no end to the taxes they could suck out of taxpayers. We're beginning to see it coming home to roost.

To return to what I was saying before, there is a way for this government, and that is, please, accept my private member's bill which I introduced to the Legislature in the last session. It passed at second reading, but the government voted down referring it to a standing committee, and then it died with the closure of the House at the end of the last term. I reintroduced it on May 17. It is called An Act to obtain the Opinion of the Public on Questions of Provincial Interest; the Provincial Public Consultation Act, 1993.

I did it on behalf of citizens who feel they do not have an adequate voice in what the government is doing, and I deliberately chose a fairly high gateway for people. We required 15% of the eligible voters to sign a petition before it could be forced on to the next provincial ballot.

This hurdle is very high. It is as high as the highest hurdle of any state in the US which has referendum legislation, but also within the legislation it called for the ability of the government to refer matters of importance such as this and such as casinos to the public where it should indeed be decided, because there is a smugness among legislators if we think that we can be all high deciders of the fate of people.

These are questions that we should be asking the people because they go to the moral fibre of our province, and it cuts across all political parties. That, sir, would be a reasonable way of resolving this question. We've established that the government waited for a year before it brought in legislation, notwithstanding that it brought it in now, at this very time we should be debating the largest tax grab in history; instead, the government has closed us down with just two days of debate.

My own party has had two speakers speaking on that subject, and last week, which was a constituency week, all our members went out across all of Ontario and consulted widely with citizens, with chambers of commerce, with union members, with business people, with municipalities as to what the impact of this budget would be. They told us, "This is a very serious problem," and they gave us many instances of problems that it would create. They asked us, and we committed, to go back to the Legislature and reflect their concerns, but we are not being allowed to reflect those.

One final point on the question of the fact that we should be debating the budget—instead, we're debating

Sunday shopping—is that in 1988 when the Liberals brought in a large tax grab of \$1.3 billion, the NDP government, which was then the official opposition under Bob Rae, stalled the House so much that the Treasurer of the day, Mr Nixon, was not able to read the budget speech in the House. Instead, he had to go into the lobby of this House and read the budget speech out there.

Notwithstanding those tactics, they had a total of 13 days of debate of that budget, of which four were immediately following the budget. Instead, we had one day immediately following the budget because the budget was so carefully engineered that it was brought in one day before we had constituency week.

To go back one year before that, this same government tried that tactic but it was even more crass. It brought it in the very day that we were rising to go into constituency week, so there was no debate immediately following the budget, and then guess what? They did not allow us any debate of that budget because they said: "Oh, you've stalled us on other legislation. You're bad boys"—bad boys and bad girls representing the people who we were elected to represent.

We have to have a voice, because otherwise democracy is seriously impaired. So once again I will say that this is very serious that today we're debating Sunday shopping one year after the bill was announced, and yet at the very same time we should be debating the budget.

I wonder if any of you across can possibly look at me and say, "Yes, that's reasonable that you only get two days of debate of the budget." How can you possibly call yourselves a democratic party when you are violating all of the traditions of democracy? There is something wrong with the way this House works, and unfortunately it is not just the NDP that bears the brunt of it; it is all parliamentarians and all parliaments that get the disrepute from this complete disregard for what the voters are saying. As the opposition, we must have a voice, because that is what the parliamentary tradition is built on, and if you take that cornerstone out, very soon we will find that the whole of our democratic process will crumble.

1740

To return to Sunday shopping, I will not be voting for it. I am very sorry for those members of the government who feel so uncomfortable because they know they electioneered on the platform that they were against Sunday shopping, and nothing has happened in the meantime to change my mind that you have found some magic way of protecting workers or tenants, because there's nothing that you have presented to date which would indicate that.

So, on behalf of those workers who don't want to be forced to work on Sunday, on behalf of the small businesses that are being forced to open, not just in malls but also on streets, because one of their competi-

tors has opened up, I'm speaking out today, and I ask you once again, put this bill on the back burner and refer it to the people. I would prefer that you referred it to people by way of an election as soon as possible, but I believe you're probably going to drag this out for another two years. But given the fact that you have spent a year with de facto Sunday shopping without a bill, I believe that you can wait another two years.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): There are two points the honourable member made in his comments that I think are worthy of some rebut. He talked about cynicism and made reference to the cynicism that the population has of politicians in general.

He also talked about the need to listen to people and the views of his constituents, and as have other members who are opposing this legislation, he referred to the fact that in asking his constituents for their view on this bill, he acknowledged that they were divided, that in fact, as another member, from Nepean, had said, it was perhaps 50-50.

So the solution of the member for York Mills is that we go to a referendum and ask people what they think, knowing, as he's already said, that the population of the province, I think it's fair to say, is generally divided and there is no consensus on this issue.

The point I want to make is that when the member talks about cynicism, nothing makes people more cynical about their politicians than to see those politicians abrogate their responsibility to show some leadership and to make some decisions.

I think it was Edmund Burke, a famous Irishman, who, in his address to the electors of Bristol, pointed out to his constituents that he owed them the best use of his intellect, and I paraphrase, not merely to be their mouthpiece.

So I urge the honourable member to show leadership, to vote—he says he's going to vote against it—but not to duck the issue. We are here to take some decisions. Sometimes they're unpopular; sometimes they are difficult. But our government is not afraid to acknowledge that views in this province have changed, views in this province are divided. But one thing we are totally confident on: The people of this province want a government that's not afraid to come to a conclusion as to what it believes is in the best interests of these people and then to take those tough decisions.

Mr Wayne Lessard (Windsor-Walkerville): I don't generally respond during this time, and usually I don't respond to the comments from the member from York Mills because I don't usually listen to them, but some of his statements were just so laughable that I feel compelled to respond.

First of all, he talked about the different positions that the members in the Tory caucus have and the fact that they're going to have a free vote on this and that

obviously shows some respect for the differing opinions of the other members in the Tory caucus, and he respects their ability to make those different types of decisions, but he doesn't have the same respect for his own constituents to exercise their responsibility to make decisions as to when they want to spend their money in his own riding.

This also comes from a member who is probably fairly right-wing on most issues and tries to convince us of his neo-conservative philosophies, his free trade philosophies, his laissez-faire, free-market, dog-eat-dog, only-the-strong-survive attitude towards things. In this case, he wants us to believe that he's really a champion of the rights of workers and that he's going to stand up to make sure they don't have to work on Sundays. I just find that kind of ironic.

He also brings up the issue with respect to small convenience store owners and argues that, "Well, we should try and do something to protect the small convenience store owners." But the only reason that they would benefit from the protection is because they would have to work on Sundays and nobody else would. That would be the only way they would benefit. I can't understand how he feels that we should have some legislation that makes people in convenience stores work but no one else.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I just want to thank the member for his comments. Contrary to what the other side said, I think he brought a—

Mr Mills: If you're in favour, Gary, I give up, after all you said in the committee.

Mr Carr: I beg your pardon?

Mr Mills: Say what you said on the committee. If you're not for this, I give up.

Mr Carr: Oh, no. I'm voting for it. I was making the comments the member for Durham asked on voting.

But I think the member brought to the debate both sides. He attempted to explain a little bit about what was happening in terms of his own personal history, and I would say that some of the comments that were made about his comments were blatantly unfair.

I had a chance to spend, I guess, four weeks with my friend from Durham on the committee, listening to people across this province. I was one of the ones who had a chance to sit and listen for four weeks while this government tried to defend its position. So don't anybody on the other side talk about any other member's position with what has happened with this party on this particular issue and this particular bill.

My friend for Durham East, during that period, spent those four weeks, as a parliamentary assistant, trying to defend the legislation, and now of course he's going to be the one supporting it. So for him to make comments across the floor about this particular bill, when we spent the time during that period listening to him defend it,

day after day the same speech coming out, so did the people on the other side—I think the comments that were made on the member's speech are blatantly unfair.

He's the man who brings to this House a great deal of determination. He might not always agree, but he is somebody who feels strongly, and I have a tremendous amount of respect for him.

The Speaker: I recognize the member for York Mills for up to two minutes for his response.

Mr Turnbull: I find it totally laughable that the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, the Minister of Health, makes those comments and then walks out before she gets an answer. But I'll put them on anyway.

I won't even waste my time with Mr Lessard because his comments were so stupid. But let me tell you that when we talk about abrogating responsibility, this government, above all, has abrogated its responsibility. It has a responsibility to listen to the people. The people are very clearly saying, "We do not want the budget," and this government is gagging the opposition from being able to speak this budget.

There has never, ever been more of an abrogation of responsibilities at any time in this Legislature, because, to my knowledge, there has never, ever been a party that has been so despised by the public that it's even losing its own deposit. It's 8% in the polls. We know that, between elections, typically the governing party may lose some by-elections but they don't normally lose their deposit, in particular in seats that they used to hold.

1750

I mean, it's just so laughable that this government, which spouts all of this pious tripe that we saw in the Agenda for People, which was a complete, utter lie to get themselves elected, having got elected, they ignore what the people are saying and, above all, ignore the opportunity for the opposition parties to be able to present a balanced approach to what is wrong with the budget. This party, when in opposition, wouldn't allow the Liberals even to present their budget in this Legislature and then got 13 days of debate. This is hypocrisy, and it's the kind of hypocrisy that not just my constituents but people all across—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I guess when we as members come into this Legislature, we do come in here with a large variety of backgrounds, a lot of different interests, a lot of different opinions. Sometimes we like to think that our opinion is the most correct opinion. There are times when we go and think we've got the answers to everything. I think we make a big mistake when we do that.

I've opposed Sunday shopping very often in the past and I think it's time for me to come to the understanding that I can't make the decisions without talking to

the people whom I represent. In talking to the people whom I represent, I've talked about this issue in particular. I've talked at a coffee shop on Dalton Road in Sutton. I've gone to the Texas Burger in Uxbridge and I've sat down and talked to some of my constituents there, because I want to hear what their opinions are on this. I feel that for me to just put my own opinions on it and say, "This is the way it's got to be," isn't the correct way to do it.

I've been in Angie's restaurant in Stouffville and have talked to constituents on this issue. In Maple Glen Apartments, the seniors' building, mainly seniors, right in Sunderland, I've gone up and down the halls and talked to some of the people there. We've talked about this issue on occasion as well.

When we talk to people, they talk to me about the need for young people to have some employment. I've got to think back too. When I went to high school, though it was many years ago, you used to have to pay your own tuition. It used to cost us money out of our pocket to go. I come from a large family. I had nine brothers and sisters, and mom and dad couldn't afford to pay the tuition for all the kids to go to school. I was the fourth-oldest, and my oldest brother and one of my older sisters and myself had part-time jobs while going to school. We helped out. We helped pay our own tuition.

We've changed the Education Act and high school students don't have to pay that tuition any more. I think that's a good move and I applaud the government of the day for doing that. But it was because I had that opportunity to work on Sundays, because I worked as a doorman at the movie theatre and picked apples on Sunday morning to help pay for some of my education and still found time to attend church, Holy Cross, where my father's a deacon—you've got to talk to people. We can't just decide that we know exactly what's best.

The polls will say there are 72% of people in favour of it. I really do have concerns about the working people, concerns that they won't have any protection.

I guess we're fortunate because of the partisan nature of this Legislature, because there are times when the opposition members might stand up, for whatever reason they feel is right at the time, and read lake after lake after lake. The reason is to delay things. Or, "I move a motion to adjourn." We have all these things. The bells will ring and things get delayed.

When that happens, though we have important things we'd like to see passed, like Bill 40, the Labour Relations Act legislation, things are delayed. We have had a chance to let Bill 38 sit out there for a year and now we're talking about it today. It's been a year. Today's the anniversary of it in fact, one year today. Because it's been a year today, we've had a chance to evaluate the impact. I haven't had a lot of people come to me and say: "We've got a real problem with this. This has

really had a negative impact." I was one of those people who said it's going to have a negative impact, but it didn't.

I think that when we talk about the committees, and we did have committee hearings on this, when the mayor of Georgina came to that committee, one of my own mayors came into the committee, and said, "Look, we need to do this because we're a tourist area," you've got to respect them, because it is a tourist area. There's a lot of tourists who go there. You have to respect that. So we have to take a look perhaps at the past to recognize that we've got to change. We've got to take a look at things.

In going through this process, I didn't want to limit myself to the people I talked to in the doughnut shops. I drew up a list of people from my riding whom I wanted to talk to, people who are leaders in the community, mayors in my community, like the mayor of Brock township. I phoned him up and asked him his opinion on this. I phoned up some of the clergy in my riding to ask them their opinion on this. Some of the clergy definitely opposed; some of the clergy had a different opinion.

In fact, I had a doctor call me up and ask me if he could come in and sit down and talk. The reason he called me up was he wanted to talk to me about Sunday shopping. He felt that the rules put unnecessary pressure on the family, and the family has got enough pressures today.

As we come out of this recession that we're in right now and as the retail market increases and improves—I think we can see some of that happening right now—there's going to be the need for more workers in retail. As more workers in retail get there, then there will be more people who have the opportunity and the choice to work or not to work and when to work and not to work. I think we have to take a look at that.

We often speak about doom and gloom. We often speak of negatives in this Legislature, which is a shame, because I think that what we need to do is try to be positive, talk about the people whom we're sent here to represent in a positive nature. We're talking about here, for example, the potential for some people to have some employment, young people whose costs today would be perhaps different than what my costs were as a youth, but still real costs. Perhaps there are some people who come from some unfortunate backgrounds who have to buy their own clothes for school or their own books or have to help out in the family.

I talk to a lot of people in my riding because I think it's important that we do this as often as we can. One week ago, I met with people from the Stouffville food bank and the Uxbridge food bank. They talked to me. It's sad that we should even have food banks. They don't want to be in business. We want to put them out of business. These people told me, "We're getting

seniors coming into the food banks and we're getting young people coming into the food banks." There are youth in our communities who don't have enough food to eat. There are obviously some problems there.

I'm not saying this is the answer to all of our problems, but if we don't listen to people, we're not going to get this sort of feedback, and I think it's important that we do that.

When I've talked to the people in my riding, you're right, there's a lot of people who agreed with me that we should move to close down all retail business on a Sunday. Even in the past, I think back to some years ago when you'd go into a large drugstore and they'd have sections roped off. They said: "It's only partially open. It's not really open, it's only kind of open."

I think what we need to do is be honest with ourselves, be honest with the people who elected us to represent them. People haven't seen a huge negative impact because of this and we have to be pragmatic. In taking a look at this, I think we've got to be realistic about it. We're elected here to make decisions. Some decisions we may not even agree with sometimes, but we've got to be pragmatic, we've got to be realistic and we've got to listen to the people who sent us here to represent them.

Mr Speaker, if you had asked me two years ago which way I would have voted on this, I would have told you: "There's no problem. I sure as heck am not going to stand here in my place in this Legislature and vote in favour of opening up stores on Sunday." But after having this happen—we've been here for a year now since this legislation was first introduced—I think I've got a much more open mind and I can see that the damage that I thought could come from it hasn't been nearly as negative, the impact, and I think in this case, I've changed my mind.

I think that we have to be willing to say that we're going to change our minds. When it's the right decision, it's time to change your mind. You've got to be able to do that and stand your ground and then take it. The next election, when I go out knocking on doors, people are going to ask me and I'm going to have to tell them that yes, I did have my mind made up for a lot of years, but I changed it, and I talked to a lot of people in my riding, a lot of constituents, for that change.

With that, Mr Speaker, I'd just like to finish.

The Speaker: Is the member for Durham-York adjourning the debate?

Mr O'Connor: Yes, Mr Speaker, I adjourn the debate.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Pursuant to standing order 55, I will indicate the business of the House for the week of June 7.

On Monday, June 7, we'll consider the government

notice of motion number 2 which requires the Legislature to sit evenings for the final two weeks of this sitting. Following that, we will resume the adjourned third reading debate on the pay equity legislation, Bill 102 and, following the completion of that item if there's time still remaining, we'll continue to the adjourned second reading debate on the capital investment plan, Bill 17.

On Tuesday, June 8, we will resume the adjourned second reading debate of Bill 38, the Retail Business Holidays Act amendments.

On Wednesday, June 9, during private members'—and I just take specific note that private members' is happening on Wednesday morning next week—we'll consider ballot item number 13, private member's Bill

21 standing in the name of Mr Wessenger, and ballot item number 14, a resolution standing in the name of Mr Callahan.

On Wednesday afternoon, we will continue the adjourned second reading debate on Bill 17, the capital investment plan.

As well, a reminder to members that by a previous order of this House, following the end of business on Wednesday June 9, we will stand adjourned until Monday June 14.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock Monday next.

The House adjourned at 1801.

CONTENTS

Thursday 3 June 1993

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Chronic Care Patients' Television Act, 1993, Bill 18, second reading	
Mr Ramsay	1125, 1131
Mr McLean	1126
Mr Mills	1127
Mr Curling	1128
Mrs Sullivan	1128
Mr Stockwell	1129
Mr Mammoliti	1130
Ms Poole	1131
Tenants and Landlords Protection Act, 1993, Bill 20, second reading	
Mr Runciman	1132, 1140
Mr Winninger	1134
Mr Cordiano	1135
Mr McLean	1137
Ms Harrington	1138
Mr Turnbull	1138
Mr Mammoliti	1139
Mr Sterling	1139

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mining industry	
Mr Miclash	1142
Ministry relocation	
Mr David Johnson	1142
Wine and Dine 93	
Mr Hansen	1142
National Access Awareness Week	
Mr Curling	1143
Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis	
Mr Tilson	1143
Ten Steps to Community Action program	
Mr Paul R. Johnson	1143
Landfill	
Mr Beer	1144
Public transportation	
Mr Cousens	1144
La Salle Strawberry Festival	
Mr Dadamo	1144

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

Estimates	
Mr Laughren	1145
Mr Phillips	1145
Mr Harris	1146
Mr Cousens	1146

ORAL QUESTIONS

Social contract negotiations	
Mrs McLeod	1147
Mr Rae	1147
Health care	
Mrs McLeod	1148
Mr Rae	1149, 1150
Mrs Sullivan	1150
Economic policy	
Mr Harris	1150
Mr Laughren	1151
Health cards	
Mr Jim Wilson	1152
Mrs Grier	1152
Transfer payments	
Mrs McLeod	1153
Mr Rae	1153
Landfill	
Mr Tilson	1154
Mr Rae	1154
Fire Services Review Committee	
Mr Duignan	1155
Mr Christopherson	1155
Economic policy	
Mr Phillips	1155
Mr Laughren	1156
Commercial fishing	
Mr Jordan	1156
Mr Hampton	1156

PETITIONS

Retail store hours	
Mr Eddy	1158
Gambling	
Mrs Witmer	1158
Mr Sutherland	1158, 1160
Mr Henderson	1158
Mr McLean	1158
Ms Carter	1159, 1160
Mr Lessard	1159
Mrs Marland	1160
Mr Duignan	1160
Mr Henderson	1160
Health care	
Mrs Sullivan	1159
Seniors' health services	
Mr Jordan	1159
Accessory apartments	
Mr Callahan	1159

Bicycling safety

Mrs Witmer	1160
Mr Hope	1160

FIRST READINGS

Farm Registration and Farm Organizations Funding Act, 1993, Bill 42	
Mr Buchanan	1161

SECOND READINGS

Retail Business Holidays Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 38	
Mr Perruzza	1161, 1168
Mr Callahan	1162, 1168
Mr David Johnson	1167
Mr Farnan	1167
Mr Mills	1168, 1176
Mr McLean	1169, 1171
Mr North	1170
Mr Winninger	1171, 1173
Mr Waters	1172
Ms Harrington	1173
Mr Daigeler	1173, 1177
Mr Turnbull	1177, 1182
Mrs Grier	1181
Mr Lessard	1181
Mr Carr	1182
Mr O'Connor	1182

OTHER BUSINESS

Estimates	
Mr Laughren	1142
Ministerial response	
Ms Poole	1157
The Speaker	1157
Business of the House	
Mr Charlton	1184

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Jeudi 3 juin 1993

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 1993 sur l'inscription des entreprises agricoles et le financement des organismes agricoles, projet de loi 42	
M. Buchanan	1161



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Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 7 June 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 7 juin 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

Table of contents

Table of contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears on the outside back cover.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Monday 7 June 1993

The House met at 1331.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I want to bring to the attention of the Legislature the announced closing of the South Baymouth Fisheries Research Unit on Manitoulin Island. Bob Rae wants to close this unit and transfer the employees from the north to the south.

Bob Rae's government has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars upgrading this facility in the past two years. The former Minister of Natural Resources, Bud Wildman, assured me at estimates committee last November of the importance of this unit to MNR and assured me that it would remain open.

Enter a new minister, enter a new deputy minister and enter a new budgetary policy. From nowhere, without consultation, came a complete reversal of government policy.

The unit has been instrumental over the years in research surrounding lake trout and back cross trout. The unit has played an important role in the rehabilitation of lake trout in Lake Huron. The facility is first class and even provides educational instruction for students across the province.

I have communicated my shock and disbelief at this decision to Minister Hampton in writing and, I might say, orally. My views are similar to the local reeve, Gary Brown, and to the people both on Manitoulin and elsewhere who are concerned with the rehabilitation of Lake Huron and lake trout.

I call upon the minister to rethink this ill-conceived closure which will save little and cost much.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I would like to focus the government's attention on a highly successful youth employment, education and training project which is operating in downtown Kitchener.

This project is a unique and innovative partnership that unites the Waterloo County Board of Education, the Waterloo region Catholic school board, Conestoga College and Lutherwood in providing a coordinated, one-stop-shopping concept for unemployed young people between the ages of 16 and 24.

This project offers a job-information-resource service, employment counselling, self-directed high school programs, the Futures program, a housing registry and an independent living skills program. Indeed, it has become a model for cooperative and integrated delivery of services throughout the province. So far, over 2,000

young people in my community have been the beneficiaries of this project.

The integration and rationalization of these services in this partnership is a direction that the government has been encouraging to take place.

I have personally spoken to the young people such as the street kids and the single mothers who have been able to turn their lives around because of this project. Unfortunately, they will be the losers if the funds do not continue to be provided.

I urge this government not to abandon these young people and not to allow this unique project to fall apart. I urge you to reconsider your decision not to provide the necessary funding.

WOODSTOCK GENERAL HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I am pleased to have this opportunity to congratulate and acknowledge the 100 years of work and effort by the auxiliary to the Woodstock General Hospital in my riding of Oxford.

The auxiliary's work began in 1893 through a group of women who helped to raise funds for the opening of the hospital in 1895. The Woodstock auxiliary is the third oldest in Ontario.

Over the last 100 years, auxiliary volunteers have worked diligently to collect funds for medical and surgical equipment for the hospital by holding different social activities such as cultural events, bingos and bridge parties.

In the early days of the auxiliary, they were extremely dedicated to patients. Some of them even kept cows to provide patients with fresh milk.

The auxiliary funds have also contributed to professional development of hospital personnel, including scholarships for nurses, employee retraining and higher education for supervisors.

Our community is proud of its auxiliary. For a century, these volunteers have dedicated time and energy to help Woodstock and the surrounding communities.

In closing, I want to again congratulate the Woodstock General Hospital auxiliary for its 100th anniversary of serving people in our community. I believe that voluntary contributions of time and effort to our communities play an important role in our Canadian culture and particularly in our health care system.

COMMUNITY RECREATION FUNDING

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): Members will recall that only a few short weeks ago I implored the Minister of Finance to make a decision on funding for the Long Sault Centennial Arena. I told the House that Cornwall township, minor sports associations and parent

groups were very anxious to learn of the government's decision, since they were planning their winter activity schedule. Now even the school children in my area are asking the government to fund the project, which is ready to go at any time.

The fund-raising is in place. All that is necessary is for the government to allocate funds, through the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation, so that this very worthwhile and necessary project can get under way.

The children of St George's School in Long Sault have stated that they have worked very hard to raise their portion of the money needed to rebuild the well-used arena. Now we need funding from the government to help us.

I hope that the Minister of Finance will listen to the children of my riding and grant the funds that will allow construction to begin.

LAND TRANSFER TAX

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): On April 26, I questioned the Minister of Finance about the non-resident land transfer tax of \$95,000 that was demanded from the family of the late Albertus Boerkamp.

Mr Boerkamp died shortly after moving from Holland to his Ontario farm at Atwood in Perth county and therefore did not complete the two years of residence in Ontario to exempt him from the foreign ownership part of the tax.

The land transfer tax on foreign ownership was never meant to apply to individuals who legitimately moved to Ontario and then happened to die. The family remains on its Perth county farm and farms it actively.

The Minister of Finance has said he could halve the amount of tax, given that Mrs Boerkamp could be considered a half owner. Mrs Boerkamp has lived here for two years and qualifies to be exempt from the foreign component of the tax.

I'm sure the Minister of Finance considers this generous, but his actions amount to nothing more than a copout on the principle of the issue. The fact remains that because of an untimely death, the Boerkamp family, which acted in good faith, is being penalized for many thousands of dollars. Mr Boerkamp certainly did not know he was going to die, and had he, he could have registered the property in his wife's name or in the family's name or the children's name.

There was a time that the NDP would have been up in arms against a government which behaved in such a fashion. I cannot accept, nor can the supporters of the Boerkamps accept, that this is being done by this government.

1340

SENIOR CITIZENS

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): June is

Seniors' Month, and today I'd like to thank the organizations in my riding that provide services to seniors, like the workers and volunteers who lend a hand to families and seniors.

This year I hosted a spring tea in the Uxbridge Seniors' Centre and I had a chance to share some tea and some stories with some seniors. This facility provides the local seniors with a friendly place to meet, to socialize and participate in a wide variety of social activities.

These services are really important to helping seniors remain in their homes and active in their communities. Many of the organizations provide services to seniors in the community, such as: home support services, Meals on Wheels, home help, transportation, home maintenance, foot care, friendly visiting, care giver relief and a monthly luncheon for isolated seniors. Homemaking is a program that allows seniors to remain in their own home and can include shopping, meal preparation and personal care.

During Seniors' Month I hope to visit some of these groups like: in Uxbridge, Community Care; in Brock township, Brock Good Neighbours; the CHATS-North Branch (Community Home Assistance To Seniors); and of course the Markham-Stouffville branch of CHATS that provides services in the Whitchurch-Stouffville area.

To wrap up, I think we all should recognize the hard work done by the volunteers and staff, providing more seniors the healthy opportunity to continue on with a healthy lifestyle.

Of course, today I did have an opportunity to participate in the kickoff of the York Region Seniors' Games. There are over 860 participants registered for today's games.

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): In opposition, the New Democratic Party used to wax eloquent about preserving prime agricultural land in the Niagara region and elsewhere in Ontario, and suggested that previous governments of another political stripe were negligent in protecting this important natural resource. When handed the reins of power, the NDP has been reluctant to implement policies that would save the farmer and ultimately the farm land which will be of such great value for future generations.

With favourable climatic conditions, excellent soils and an expert workforce, the northern portion of the Niagara Peninsula is ideal for the growing of tender fruit and other agricultural products. The produce grown is of the highest quality and is famous around the world.

If the government wishes to save the agricultural land of the Niagara region, it must develop policies designed to make farming viable and geared to producing a decent income for farmers.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food has before him a sensible, thoughtful proposal for conservation easements that appears to be collecting dust on his desk. The easements would enable farmers to survive on the land, grow top-notch produce and contribute to the preservation of an essential natural resource.

With a lot of fanfare, the Premier, when in opposition, visited the Niagara farm land and lamented its potential loss. He and his colleagues have an opportunity to preserve it. They need only act upon their own promises to leave a lasting legacy to our province, our country and our world.

RETAIL SALES TAX REBATES

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): In the spring budget the Minister of Finance announced that the retail sales tax rebate for out-of-province visitors will be cancelled, effective next month. The cancellation of this incentive to visitors to Ontario was not welcome news to the tourism industry, already on its knees because of excessive provincial taxes and the stubborn recession. Many tourist operators and associations have already spent precious marketing dollars to produce brochures and promotional literature advertising the rebate to visitors to Ontario.

Other provinces such as Quebec and Manitoba are aggressively marketing their harmonized visitor rebate programs. Quebec and Manitoba have harmonized the provincial tax rebate programs with the GST visitor rebate program. Foreign visitors to these provinces can enjoy the convenience of receiving their rebates instantly, in cash, at land-border duty-free shops when they exit either province with a land-border access to the United States. In Quebec, the combined PST-GST rebate amounts to over 15%, while in Manitoba the combined rate is 14%.

Quebec and Manitoba are aggressively marketing their harmonized visitor tax rebate programs. Manitoba rebates have increased dramatically. Ontario, on the other hand, is left behind in the dust as other provinces successfully attract foreign visitors.

Tax rebate programs can be effective, as evidenced by the Quebec and Manitoba examples, but only when foreign visitors know about the program and when it is easy to implement. I would suggest to this government that it reimplement the retail sales tax rebate program, fashioning the program after the successful models which Quebec and Manitoba are using.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG TREATMENT

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): We are becoming more aware of existing social problems in native communities worldwide. The harsh realities of native suicide have been brought to our attention, it seems, more in the past year than in the past 500 years. This, to me, indicates a strong message: Together we need to do more. As part of the healing process, we must come

together to deal directly with the underlying issues that contribute to emotional distress.

For native communities in Cochrane North, part of the healing process will be made possible on June 22. The Sagashtawao Healing Lodge, meaning the dawn of a new day, is a drug and alcohol abuse treatment centre for native residents of the James Bay coast, opening in Moosonee. It will be the first of nine healing centres across Ontario offering services in the Cree language. Native people will be able to receive holistic healing methods which reflect traditional Cree values. In the past, people were being sent as far away as Edmonton for this type of treatment.

The establishment of the 12-bed facility was initiated by the Keewatinook alcohol abuse program and involved input from the Mushkegowuk first nations communities. The lodge, funded by the provincial Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and the Ministry of Health and the federal government, will employ 11 people.

I'm extremely pleased about this initiative and would like to express my sincere appreciation to all who contributed to this development.

ANNUAL REPORT, OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the annual report of the Ombudsman for the period April 1, 1992, to March 31, 1993.

I would draw to members' attention, and indeed ask them to invite warmly to our chamber this afternoon, one of the officers of the assembly, the Ombudsman, who is seated in the Speaker's gallery. Welcome.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS NÉGOCIATIONS DU CONTRAT SOCIAL

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): The single most important goal of this government is to make investments and implement policies that will put Ontario back to work. The plan we have proposed to renew the Ontario economy includes the largest capital investments by any province to modernize our infrastructure. Through an imaginative array of programs under Jobs Ontario, we're putting tens of thousands of Ontarians back to work building the roads, bridges, subway lines and other public facilities that help improve the province's competitive edge and therefore its future economic wellbeing.

On another front, we're working in partnership with the private sector to make investments which secure existing jobs and provide workers with new skills, and to build modern manufacturing facilities that are the source of jobs for the future. We're achieving our goal of putting Ontario back to work in the face of the worst recession since the 1930s, despite drops in government

revenues and increasing demands on public funds.

Our plan to renew the economy of Ontario is built on a tough, practical approach to managing the government's finances. This government has accomplished what no government of this province has done in 50 years. We have, for the first time, reduced total government spending on programs. Using principles of good management and fairness, we've implemented a program to reduce and then eliminate the provincial deficit. We have cut the government's own expenses by \$4 billion. The recent budget introduced tax and other revenue measures worth another \$2 billion. We've asked the people of Ontario to bear a fair share of the burden of controlling the deficit. Every sector and every region of the province has made a contribution to moving the province towards that goal.

The concept of negotiating a new social contract is a vital part of the government's strategy of economic renewal and job creation. The thousands of formal and informal agreements among those who deliver public services, those who benefit from them and those who pay for them all constitute the social contract which makes Ontario work.

The renewed and modern economy Ontario needs to move into the future requires that we also rethink and modernize the social contract that binds our society and makes it work. The government proposed this process of modernization and restructuring to public sector workers. It was clear to everyone that one of our goals was to achieve a saving of \$2 billion in public sector compensation. We also made it clear that in this challenge there was an opportunity.

1350

We proposed to the province's 950,000 public workers that they participate in negotiating new ways of carrying out their work for the public, in fixing their compensation, their benefits and working conditions.

Quelques personnes nous ont dit et soutiennent toujours que ce n'était qu'une perte de temps, qu'il aurait été plus simple de ne pas penser à négocier et d'imposer tout simplement notre solution. Ce sont les mêmes premiers ministres de salon qui déclarent qu'il est facile de combler un déficit, de créer des emplois et de remettre l'Ontario sur la route de la relance économique.

Nous n'arriverons à rien si nous essayons de jeter le blâme sur quelqu'un d'autre ; ce n'est qu'en collaborant que nous trouverons des solutions.

We will not succeed by finding someone to blame. We will only succeed by working together to find solutions, and that remains the foundation of the government's approach.

The effort to build a new social contract between the people of Ontario, the government, the nurses, teachers, police officers and other public workers of the province

is a difficult task. It's full of risk and frustration. Though the effort at the negotiating table did not achieve everything that we wished, it was none the less an important process. The talks focused the attention of all public workers, indeed of the entire population of the province, on the need to rethink how we deliver services and create the conditions that empower public workers to do the best job possible for Ontarians.

The social contract talks have broken rigid patterns of thinking about public services. They have set in motion a process of change and brought forth from public workers new ideas to improve public services and to keep them affordable. The representatives of public workers in every sector of society had a hand in shaping new ideas, bringing new approaches to the table, and in building through a process of collective bargaining an agreement not only to reduce costs, but to bring the public sector into the future as an essential support for the economic wellbeing and quality of life of people in Ontario.

The many ideas and new approaches that were arrived at during the social contract negotiations are a credit to all those who participated. They are an achievement for the people of Ontario, whose investment of support and hope in the talks will be justified by the results: better services delivered more efficiently and at a better cost.

The government is proud of what took place around the social contract table. I'm honoured today to report on the content of the package that had been negotiated by the end of the talks last week. Many people worked countless hours to forge these proposals. They drew on their individual experiences as public servants to examine how they work, how they can work better and how the exchange between public workers, those who use public services, those who pay for them and the government that manages the process can be made to work better for all the residents of Ontario.

It's not easy to change how we think about work and our routines, to adjust our expectations to reality and to put the common wealth or good ahead of private or partisan interests. Those who worked at the social contract tables achieved that objective. It is their efforts which brought about the offer which was on the table from the government when the social contract talks came to an end. That offer included:

— Job security: The guiding principle has been to preserve jobs and to preserve services. The result was an assurance that every worker affected by the abolition of a position would have a priority for another job with the same public sector employer or with employers in the same industry or within the same region. For those affected by layoffs, we proposed a job security fund totalling \$300 million over three years to top up laid-off workers' UIC benefits to 95% of take-home pay for one year or to be used to extend notice periods and allow

time for retraining. The job security proposals had the effect of strengthening existing collective agreements in the critical area of job security. I'm proud of those proposals; I think they're very sound.

—To recognize the link between the social contract and public investment in jobs, it was proposed to set up a provincial capital partnership board whose job it would be to participate in decision-making on capital investments aimed at improving public services.

—Employees making less than \$30,000 a year would be exempt from measures that affect compensation.

—Wage increases and merit increases will be deferred until April 1, 1996.

—The most significant savings would be realized by setting up a system of unpaid leaves of absence administered in such a way as to protect overall service delivery and to accommodate the preferences of individual workers.

—Public sector workers would participate in eliminating wasteful expenditures and practices. Savings would be used as follows: one half to offset the social contract target for the sector where waste was eliminated; one half to be retained by the employer to preserve services and employment through training or redeployment.

As a result of this process, it was envisaged that there could be a saving of \$500 million in contributions to pension funds: not to entitlements from those funds, but to contributions to them. The government proposed to utilize this amount to provide job security and to achieve part of the total savings target of \$2 billion. This proposal would have in no way affected the pension entitlements of public workers, but rather was evidence of the government's flexibility in working with public sector unions to achieve the overall target for savings.

These and the other components which were on the table at the end of the social contract negotiations could not have been arrived at without the full and energetic participation of public sector unions, employers' groups and government representatives. They are the result of a new way of achieving our common purpose: to improve the quality of the services we provide to the public, to bring their costs in line with our resources, to make public sector workers participants in decisions that affect the cost and quality of the services they provide to the public.

I invite all members of this House to join me in congratulating everyone who laboured these past weeks to bring forth the ideas and solutions to establish a new social contract for Ontario. The government of Ontario welcomes these solutions and will ensure that they form part of the process of reforming public services in Ontario so they can better serve the interests of the people of this province.

That remains one of our key objectives and it remains our intention, as part of this process of reform and renewal, to achieve the savings of \$2 billion in public sector compensation that was our initial target. The government will announce later this week how it will keep its commitment to achieve those savings as part of its plans to control the debt, to protect jobs and services and to put Ontario back to work.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I find it a little bit difficult to relate the statement that the Premier has just made to the fact that there was no agreement reached last week and I simply cannot join in congratulating a Premier or his government on the failure of the process that he put in place, although indeed I do respect the very sincere efforts that were made by the participants in the process to make an absolutely impossible situation work.

I suspect that the Premier probably feels that as an opposition leader I take some kind of satisfaction in the failure of the talks. But I can assure him I take absolutely no satisfaction at all in this absolutely no-win situation which he has now put this province in.

It is true that I have been pessimistic about this process having had any chance for success from the very beginning. I have said all along that I did not believe that you could successfully negotiate with the representatives of 9,000 individual collective agreements at one central bargaining table, and I believed that was particularly true when many of those people who are responsible for reaching those collective agreements were not even at that new bargaining table and there was no one there who could bargain responsibly on their behalf.

I have never understood how broad-brush solutions could work across all the sectors that were involved, and in fact I could not believe some of the proposals that the government put forward in the process of conducting those negotiations. We have been in fact as worried about some of the tradeoffs that might have been made in reaching a deal as we were concerned about the chaos if the talks indeed collapsed, and I believe that our pessimism is a direct result of our realism.

We have said from the very beginning that this government had two responsibilities. The first responsibility was to bring in a budget to set realistic financial targets that would have to be achieved. The second responsibility was for the government to sit down with its own employees and negotiate the way to achieve the reductions and let other employer and employee groups do exactly the same thing.

1400

We take absolutely no satisfaction at all in the fact that we have now had eight wasted weeks and we have nothing to show for that except a level of frustration and anger and confrontation of a kind that we have

never seen in this province and that is going to make any resolution of these issues just that much more difficult. I take no satisfaction at all in what has occurred over the past eight weeks and I certainly do not feel it is a source for the government to feel some pride over.

I am as frustrated and as worried as everybody else in this province when I ask the question, what happens now? I am absolutely appalled that the Premier of this province, who put this process in place, had no backup plan to put in place if his talks failed. I am dismayed that he comes into the House today and still appears to have no backup plan at all, has no idea of what to do next. I am concerned that it is in fact too late now for any alternative to get us out of the absolute chaos that has been created.

On Friday, this Premier talked a lot about rhetoric. He talked about the rhetoric of union leaders who had been involved in trying to reach some agreement at the social contract tables, he talks about the rhetoric of opposition leaders, but he himself has been indulging in what I consider to be unrealistic and rather grandiose dreams of achieving an unprecedented social contract instead of providing real leadership that works on the ground.

He has said that we should not blame the people who were the negotiators for the government or the people who were the participants in the talks, and I could not agree with that more, because the responsibility for this whole situation belongs directly with the Premier. It was his mismanagement of this entire issue that has created this chaos. If he believed that this process could work, I ask why his government began by talking about wage rollbacks and job layoffs before it even called people together to engage in this cooperative new approach to resolving the issues. I ask why he added to the anxiety and the confrontation by continuing to make veiled threats of "settle or else." Surely, this is not the way in which you produce a constructive and cooperative result.

I finally ask why this all started so late. We are halfway into the year. Budgets have been set. Contracts have been reached. People are about to be laid off and this government knew at least last fall that its own budget was in trouble, yet it did nothing until six weeks before it brought in the budget. This is total chaos; it is complete mismanagement. It is the responsibility of this Premier and this government to deal with it. It is time for some real leadership here.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): The Premier is a graduate of the University of Toronto. He'll be familiar with the E.J. Pratt Library just up the street from Queen's Park. I don't know if members of the House are familiar with any of Pratt's work, but today I'm thinking of Pratt's poem *The Titanic*:

"No wave could sweep those upper decks, unthinkable,

"The perfect ship at last.

"The first unsinkable."

The tragic story of the *Titanic* is one that I think about today. It's a story of overwhelming human pride, a story of hubris. They thought the ship was unsinkable. The ship designers and the builders didn't supply enough lifeboats. They didn't have sufficient evacuation plans. They ignored warnings from other ships, the *America*, the *Baltic*, the *Californian*.

I warned the taxing and the spending government of four years ago, I warned the Liberals they were not planning for economic downturns. The Liberal taxing and spending approach, whether by them or by you, Mr Premier, was leading to spending that could not possibly be sustained. It was leading to the size of government that not only would contribute to an economic downturn, but could not possibly be sustained during one.

I wrote the following in a *Financial Post* article in January 1991:

"We need long-term economic and fiscal reform. Controls on public spending, for example, are vital to the achievement of long-term fiscal stability....Massive tax hikes during an economic boom have failed to balance the books and high spending has clearly failed to achieve a commensurate increase in the quality of public service." What do we have to show for all this spending of the last 10 years, to be fair? It's a massive increase in taxation and spending, and not very much else.

That was 1991. I warned the Liberals. I've warned the NDP. You both kept stoking the fires of that huge ship called government, and the hubris of these Liberal and NDP shipbuilders has placed us in this disastrous situation. They were warned, but they continued the lavish spending. Like the champagne and roast duckling in Pratt's poem, the excesses continued, and now we face this very difficult situation.

The Premier has several options at his disposal. None will be easy. None are simple. My advice to the Premier is that panic is no substitute for planning. It took us several years to get into this mess. We need immediately to change direction. The important thing, though, is that we change direction, and it will take several years to get us out of this mess. The government's too large. It taxes too much and it spends too much.

There seem to be three options the Premier has left himself to implement his plan: (1) layoffs, (2) arbitrary cuts to transfer payments and (3) wage rollbacks.

It goes without saying that none of those options would have been necessary if the mess had not been created in the first place, but it was. We're in a mess and we need to get out of it. There is, however, a fourth option, and there may be many others. But I believe the Premier should move to institute the option that I

presented as a fourth option, or a fifth, sixth, seventh or eighth, because the first three are unacceptable to Ontarians.

I believe the Premier could move immediately to institute a hiring freeze and a wage freeze in the broader public sector over the next three years. We must systematically begin reviewing the work performed by government and its employees. We must review the services provided and the method of delivering those services. The restructuring of government must be real and it must be permanent.

We must systematically begin downsizing government in this province. At the same time, we must pave the way for the upsizing of the private sector. We must allow our private sector to compete, to grow and to prosper. I've said this many times before. The Premier must look at this as a two-sided coin. You must have a comprehensive plan to see the private sector upsized before you begin downsizing the public sector, as you must do, and we agree with that.

So I say to the Premier again that I am willing to work with this government. Again, I'm willing to sit down in a non-partisan way. I'm willing to sit, if the Premier likes—perhaps it would have been better if the Premier and the leader of the Liberal Party and myself were at the contract talks, because I didn't see a lot of experience, either on the union side or on the government side, at the bargaining table. If you would have taken some advice from those who have had some experience, both on the union side, the Canadian Auto Workers, for example, and on the public sector side—but I say we are still willing to be part of the solution and we'll continue to offer alternatives.

RETAIL STORE LEGISLATION

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Just prior to oral questions on Tuesday, May 18, the member for St George-St David (Mr Murphy) rose in the House on a question of privilege.

The member indicated that the government had issued instructions that a provision in the Retail Business Holidays Act prohibiting Sunday shopping would no longer be enforced. The member also indicated that the government had issued these instructions after announcing in 1992 that it was introducing an amending bill which, if passed, would permit Sunday shopping. The amendment bill was given first reading in the last session, but has yet to receive second reading.

The member suggested that, by acting as if the amending bill were law, the government had violated his privileges and the privileges of all members of the House. Although the member did not indicate what specific heading of privilege had been violated, I reviewed the relevant authorities. I find that the member's concern does not amount to a *prima facie* case of privilege.

Furthermore, I want to assure the member that I am cognizant of the fact that, in recent years, Speakers in other jurisdictions have had to rule on whether certain government pronouncements on bills constituted a contempt of the House on the ground that the pronouncements openly suggested that the bills would become law. Having reviewed the submissions of the member for St George-St David in light of those rulings, I find that the member's concern does not constitute a contempt of the House.

I again thank the member, not only for his interest in the matter, but for the way in which he brought the matter to my attention.

It is time for oral questions, and the Leader of the Opposition.

1410

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My first question is for the Premier. We have kept asking you what your alternatives would be in the event that your social contract talks failed. You have responded over the last couple of weeks with vague threats that the parties at the social contract table had better reach an agreement, or else. The question we asked last week was, "Or else what?" It now becomes absolutely apparent that you had no backup plan. The question this week is, "What now?" After your statement today, we have no clearer idea of what you plan to do next than we had before.

I ask the question very directly, Premier, what now? What are you going to do now?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): The Leader of the Opposition has repeated the canard which found its way into a headline in the Toronto Star when she says that I went around saying, "Do this or else." That's not my style. That's not what I said. That's not the direction the government is taking.

What the government is now doing is obviously considering what is the fairest and best way to ensure the reduction of \$2 billion in public sector compensation costs while at the same time ensuring that services will be delivered in a fair way, that as many jobs as possible can be protected and that all the parties who are the parties to the hundreds, and indeed thousands, of collective agreements that the Leader of the Opposition keeps referring to can continue to take some ownership of a continuing challenge for the whole of the public sector, which does not belong exclusively to the provincial government.

As the leader of the third party has pointed out, this is something that's going to take some consideration. We are moving quickly to do it. We've had several meetings as a caucus and as a cabinet, and I gave the House the assurance today in my statement that before

the House adjourns at the end of this week—that's to say Wednesday; Wednesday's the last sitting day this week, because we've agreed to let the Conservatives go to their convention on Thursday.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): We don't want to go. Let's stay.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Mr Harris: We want to stay here.

Hon Mr Rae: No, we want to give the various campaigns a chance.

I will be making a statement before the end of the close of session this week indicating clearly the outline of the government's approach.

I would say to the honourable member that one has to be realistic about the kinds of preparations that go into making a decision of this kind—

The Speaker: Would the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: —but I can assure her that the matter is well in hand and the commitments of the government are very clear.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, it is just too late in the game to calmly tell us that everything is well in hand. Nobody believes that everything is well in hand. Even Stephen Lewis has reportedly called the social contract process hastily conceived and shabbily executed. It's quite clear that it was not very thoroughly thought through.

Premier, we happen to agree with you on one point, and that is that there is broad public support for financial restraint. Furthermore, I believe that people were ready to work with you to find some solutions to the financial problems that this province faces. I continue to be concerned about the fact that in this very grandiose process you set up, many of the people who could actually reach the agreements were not at the table. For the past month we have been asking you to sit down and negotiate with your own employees and allow other employee and employer groups to do exactly the same thing.

I ask you very specifically today, will you now get on with what needs to be done? Will you sit down at the table with your own employees and will you give others the tools they need to do the same thing?

Hon Mr Rae: Yes.

Mrs McLeod: I assume, since others cannot sit down at the table without the tools they need, that the Premier heard the emphasis in the question, because I was very particularly emphatic, and that he will then be able to tell us what his legislation will look like and when he is going to bring in the legislation. This is not a time for easy and flippant answers. There are a tremendous number of people across this province

whose lives have been put on hold because of the failure of this process. They've waited eight weeks for resolution. They still have no answers. People are at the point of decisions.

I hope that the Premier, in responding to this third supplementary, will give some thought when he gives me a simple yes as to exactly what that means. I hope he will tell people specifically what his next steps will be, how quickly he will bring in the legislation which will be needed to give people the tools to sit down at the local contract table, what that legislation will look like, and I hope he will be thinking as he gives me this answer not of some flippant way of responding today, not of calmly telling us the situation's in hand, but of those people who are today waiting for their—

The Speaker: Could the leader conclude her supplementary, please.

Mrs McLeod: —layoff notices and all of those college and university and high school people who are wondering whether they'll have a spot in school next year, remember that they are waiting for his answer today and tell us what he is saying to those people in very specific terms.

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to the honourable member that it's not the government negotiators who walked away from the negotiations on Thursday evening—I think that's something she might want to reflect on and recognize as a fundamental reality of where we are today—and then say to her very directly that I've indicated already in answer to her previous questions that the answers to the kinds of questions she's asking are answers that I think we can be much closer to providing later on in the week and that we will be providing to her and to the province later on in the week, but say to her directly—she says, if I answer quickly to a question saying yes, she asks me, are we willing to sit down with our own employees? The answer to that is, of course. We were there on Thursday night. We were there Thursday night, and we're still willing to negotiate with our own employees. Of course. Of course we are.

Second of all, I say to her, are there the tools available for others to do the same? The answer to that is, of course there are.

As a result of what happened on Thursday night, the government is obviously going to have to take further steps to ensure that the kind of approach we've taken—and I'm delighted to see the kind of positive response the member is giving in terms of our efforts to enter into a dialogue and say to her that if she has any more practical suggestions, we'd be glad to consider them.

The Speaker: New question.

Mrs McLeod: We'll wait to read the results of the scrum, when the Premier hopefully will be asked to

explain specifically what it is he means in terms of tools he is going to give people to get on with this business of resolution.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): We are almost totally preoccupied with the social contract talks and people are tremendously concerned about them. I am nevertheless absolutely determined that we are going to keep pushing what the government says it recognizes as the other part of the agenda but refuses to do anything about.

There were recent unemployment figures that came out this weekend that confirmed what we all are only too well aware of, and that's that the economy is not producing more jobs. The fact that was shown was that Ontario lost 13,000 permanent jobs last month. The unemployment problem is being felt in communities across this province.

John Mirski, who is a local retailer in Kingston, has received over 1,000 job applications from local unemployed people who are desperate to find work, and I can tell the Premier that many of these 1,000 applicants are already highly skilled individuals. They include machinists and engineers and skilled tradespeople and university graduates. They're looking for jobs in the retail sector because there are no other jobs, but there are no jobs in the retail sector either. Mr Mirski sent us the 1,000 applications. He asked us to pass on these comments to you and he says:

"I hope that these applications put a face to the numbers that the government seems to so flippantly rhyme off. I hope you can present them to the government. Labour legislation and taxation have encouraged employers to do anything to minimize the number of people on their payrolls."

So, Premier, I ask you, how do you respond to the fact of 13,000 permanent jobs that were lost last month and to these particular 1,000 people in Kingston who are so desperately looking for a job?

1420

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I would say to the honourable member that I don't think any of us go through a day when we don't recognize the fact that an unemployment rate of over 10.5%, which is where the rate still stands in the province, is too high, and that creating the new opportunities and new work and new opportunities for training has to be the top priority for the government.

I know the member says, "Well, it's the labour legislation which is causing the problem." I don't think there are too many objective observers who feel that way. Other provinces are facing similar challenges to ours. Other parts of the world are facing them as well. We are still further ahead this year than last year. That happens to be a fact. She may not want to get up and

say that, but it happens to be true.

But I want to assure her and assure the members of the House that while she may not agree with the way in which this government is facing up to the problem, I can assure her that there's no priority that's higher. That's why we're putting as much as we're putting into the capital works program, that's why we're putting as much as we are into the Jobs Ontario Training program and that's why we're putting as much effort as we can into working with the private sector, in partnership with the private sector, in the creation of new employment opportunities there.

So I would say to her that we all recognize the fact that unemployment is a challenge for us as Canadians and we are doing everything we can to address the problem.

Mrs McLeod: I say to the Premier that this is not a training issue; this is a real jobs issue. We've lost 13,000 permanent jobs, and the unemployment statistics also show that our young people are facing increased unemployment. Part of that is permanent and part of that is the need for summer employment.

Youth unemployment in May was up by almost half a percentage point over April, and even more important than that was the fact that youth unemployment is a full two percentage points higher this May than it was in May a year ago.

We have certainly heard from Mr Mirski in Kingston, who doesn't have jobs for the 1,000 skilled applicants who are looking for permanent jobs, that he won't be hiring any more students this summer either.

Premier, I simply ask you, when you see this kind of increase in youth unemployment combined with the loss of permanent jobs in this province, why can you not understand the impact your policies and your budget, your labour legislation and your taxation are having on industries and businesses in tourism, in the retail sector, in hospitality, in the very businesses that normally employ our young people?

Hon Mr Rae: Again I'm sure the honourable member will want to say, "There's more you could do," and I know she put out a program in which she said: "Spend more money in every government program there is. Just go out and spend more." We'd love to be able to do that, but I would say to her that I hope she would recognize, after her discussions with some of her other colleagues, that we put \$185 million into youth employment programs. No government's put more into programs, and if we can find more, we obviously will be prepared to invest it.

But the challenge we face is making sure that at the same time we stick to some realistic financial targets, that we recognize that even with the measures that were taken, even with the extraordinary measures we're taking, we still have a deficit situation of over \$9

billion, so obviously there are limits to how much the government can simply spend to solve the problem.

I would say to her that we're working with the private sector. I've had some very good discussions with the retail industry, we've had good discussions with the people working in the auto industry, with people working in all the different sectors. We've had good discussions and we do believe that with a continuing sound management of the overall financial situation, here and in the rest of the country and indeed in North America, there are real prospects for growth this year.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): Our leader has indicated to you in percentage terms the impact of unemployment. The unemployment figure released last week indicated that 189,000 students are unable to find the jobs they need to go back to school in the fall. Premier, you have effectively destroyed the vision of hope of our young people. The OSAP grant is gone and they have to depend on loans. Those who have been trying to complete their education to improve their futures can't find the temporary positions they need to go back to school. What do you tell these young people when they wonder how they will be able to complete their education? There seems to be no future for them. Could you comment on that?

Hon Mr Rae: I say to the member from Scarborough, whose experience in this area I have a lot of respect for, that we're putting far more money into these programs in terms of youth employment and opportunities for people returning to school than any other government. Clearly, we need a national program as well: We have no national youth employment programs at the moment, and clearly, we need them. I think it's time they came, and came to the fore as issues that need to be addressed.

But what other government in the country is spending \$185 million on youth programs? What other government in the country is putting together the kinds of programs for young people? There is no other government that's doing it on the scale and at the level and with the intensity that we are. Yes, I'm sure there's more that can be done. Obviously, in response to what we see here, we'll try to do even more, if that's possible. But it's important for everyone to recognize, and I hope even the Liberal Party will recognize, that we are investing a lot, we are putting everything we can into the process. As I say, if we can find more, we certainly will.

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Premier. For the last two months you've been dancing, so to speak, with the union leaders. Taxpayers were willing to let you try this. I certainly was willing to let you try. But throughout this time it appears that you were dancing to the union leaders' tune, and now the dance is over.

People's futures, however, are on the line. We're dealing with students. We're dealing with families. We're dealing with children. We're dealing with both public and private sector Ontarians. The uncertainty out there of people who are worried about their jobs or people who want jobs is overwhelming.

I wonder if the Premier can tell me why he did not have a backup plan in the event, as happened, that the social contract talks failed.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I would say to the honourable member that obviously we have an approach that we're continuing with and that we are now going to carry out in order to effect the \$2 billion in savings. I would say to him that we've already indicated to everyone and to the House that the government's commitment to the \$2 billion stands, that we wanted to allow a process of negotiation to take place without any kind of "or else," despite the newspaper headlines to the contrary.

Now that the unions decided on Thursday night, 24 hours before the conclusion of talks, to walk away unilaterally from the talks, the government has to look to other measures that will ensure fairness, delivery of services, a respect for the participation of employers and employees in finding a solution and our clear commitment as a government to the bottom line, and the bottom line is that the \$2 billion has to come out.

Mr Harris: The union leaders whom I've talked to tell me that without knowing what the "or else" was, they didn't have a mandate from their members to negotiate away and break their contracts. In spite of the fact that you didn't want to be known for "or else," they're saying that the lack of that led to the failure of the talks.

Premier, you're management. You're elected to make the tough decisions. You're elected as management to lead and set the direction. Regardless of how confident you may have been of the talks, good management always has a contingency plan. We urged you for weeks to tell us, to tell the union leaders, what you would do the day the talks failed, what was the "or else."

But you continued, it seems to me, to live in this dream world, Never Never Land, thinking that the union leaders, many of whom I have talked to—who, if they had a mandate from their membership, would have been prepared to negotiate a deal, as long as their membership understood what the "or else" was.

Now, to attack the deficit your way, you can do one of three things. To implement your plan (1) you can cut transfers by \$2 billion, leaving hospitals and school boards in chaos, (2) you can force layoffs and throw thousands out of work with nowhere to go in the private sector, or (3) you can look for \$2 billion in rollbacks from existing wages.

The time for action's long overdue, you would agree

with me. Which one of those three do you intend to do?

Hon Mr Rae: I'm not sure I quite agree with the characterization of all the options that have been put forward, but I would say to the honourable leader of the third party that the government's commitment to a reduction in the overall size of the broader public sector payroll by some \$2 billion remains firm, our view that this can be done by building on the experiences and the information and the knowledge and, frankly, the experience of the last two months, which has not been lost and has not been wasted. In fact, there's been an extremely valuable process.

I'm not saying that it resulted in a successful conclusion on Thursday night; of course not. But I am saying that none of that experience has been lost, and it must all be built on. I've found in my discussions with our public sector partners a real willingness to say: "You gave it your best shot in that regard. Now let's look at what the next logical stage is, moving on from there."

1430

In our view, the next logical stage is to carry on, in the spirit of the social contract, to look at the ways in which the parties themselves can come up with creative and effective solutions and to make sure that the parties themselves have the effective tools with which to do the job while respecting their historic relationships and while respecting the need for us to preserve jobs and to protect services at the same time as we get that \$2 billion out. The government's commitment to getting it out is clear. Our strong, strong commitment to the people of the province to ensure services is there and our commitment to the working people of this province to save as many jobs as we can is there as well.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: All of those steps, it seems to me, must be taken, and those are the kinds of steps that the government will be looking to implement in our announcement later on this week.

Mr Harris: Premier, you have all these directions and all these philosophical views, but you have no plan. You have no specifics, and if you did have, shame on you for not sharing them with the union leaders, because they're telling you that if you'd done that, they might have been able to reach a deal.

You wouldn't accept any of my advice on how you could have made your plans work better, bringing in people who actually have some experience negotiating, telling people where you stood, what the "What if" was. You ignored all that. In addition to that, last week I presented you and your Treasurer with a fourth option. It was contained in our Prosperity Agenda, as part of that plan. This was an agenda that dealt not just with social contract talks but also with a prosperity agenda

and upsizing the private sector. It dealt as well with controlling your own costs and your own spending.

This agenda, in my view, put Ontario, not just the public sector, first. I explained to you that natural attrition in dealing with the public sector would result in a 2%-per-year reduction in staff. Over three years that's 56,000 fewer public servants, 16,000 fewer than your plan seeks to downsize by. There's a three-year plan with natural attrition, with a hiring freeze. It would mean a permanent downsizing of government, no unnecessary layoffs, enough flexibility to ensure priority services are maintained, and quite frankly, no legislation is even required to implement that one. Can you tell me why you will not look at the fourth option plan that I've presented to you that would allow you to get the savings that you need and provide a three-year plan with no unnecessary layoffs and with no legislation?

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to him that his off-the-cuff view—and I don't want to be too critical of it—that somehow attrition alone will solve the problem is a view that is not shared universally by others in the field and I would say to him directly that if he has any serious proposals, we would be glad to look at them.

Mr Harris: I tell the Premier that the figures that I give him come from his government. They're his government figures.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My second question is to the Premier as well. Your refusal, along with your predecessor government's, to recognize that government has had a serious spending problem for the last number of years in Ontario, not a revenue problem, and your refusal to recognize that for your first two years in office, has left more than just the public sector in a mess—your social contract talks are trying to deal with that—it has also left the private sector in disarray. It has left taxpayers in disarray. It has left families and left young people with loss of hope and in disarray. Your mismanagement of the province's affairs is responsible for your \$2-billion tax grab. Your \$2-billion increase in spending before you're going to claw back wages is responsible for that in your budget.

But, Premier, as well as all of the problems in delivering government services and downsizing, there's a struggling private sector out there, outside of this building, that has been left out in the cold. I would ask you this: When we finally do see what your plan is—you keep telling us you have one, but it's hidden away—when we see what your plan is for the public sector, will you also unveil your plans for growth and prosperity and an upsizing of the private sector?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): The government's policies on the private sector—we brought in the budget. You may not agree with it, but we think it has provided some real sense of certainty to the marketplace. Also, we think that on a sector-by-sector basis, we have a

very good relationship with the business community and with the private sector. We see signs of investment decisions being made, we see signs of jobs being created and some very significant decisions. So I would say to him that as far as the future is concerned of our relationship with the private sector, I have a much more positive outlook than the leader of the third party.

Mr Harris: The Premier says I may not agree with the budget. What I agree with is not important. The private sector doesn't agree with it. Those who may invest five cents don't agree with it. The only people I can find who agree with it are those who never have and never plan to invest five cents of their own money in this province. That's the problem. It's not whether I agree; it's whether the private sector, the job creators, agree. You now need the private sector more than ever. So while you've been fixated on this social contract process, one that I agree needs attention, businesses have gone bankrupt, people have lost their jobs, and \$2 billion in new taxes will only deepen the economic woes in the private sector.

You know my views on taxes, Premier, but there are many other things that you can do that will help the private sector and allow it to create jobs. You can scrap Bill 40 and you can look at other regulations that are barriers to allowing our private sector to compete. You can immediately move to reduce the interprovincial trade barriers, towards scrapping them. You can scrap lot levies, something you opposed when you were in opposition, when the Liberals brought them in.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the leader place a question.

Mr Harris: Now you continue to collect all that money, thwarting the building of private sector housing.

Why have you rejected all these solutions and many more that are presented to you to help our private sector grow and prosper?

Hon Mr Rae: The leader of the third party may want to spend his time debating legislation that was passed over a year ago; that's up to him. I would just simply say to him that if you look at the decisions that are being made week by week by large and small companies, you will see a sign that business formation is up, that business investment is up; General Motors making its decision last week.

You may well think that your recipe for what is going to carry you into this office, what's going to sweep you to power, is a message of doom and gloom, and that if you vote for Mike Harris, you'll never have to pay any taxes for the rest of your life. Free beer tomorrow. I don't think that's a program that has any credibility.

This government is taking the toughest decisions that any government has had to take in the last 50 years. We're proud of them and we're seeing now that the

economy is starting to turn around. We're beginning to see some positive signs in terms of the investment climate and we're dealing with government spending in a way that your party never had the guts to even start to deal with when you were in office and when you were in cabinet. You never sat around in cabinet and had to deal with the kind of issues we've dealt with in managing the public sector. So I just don't take your rhetoric very seriously.

Mr Harris: I'm always amused that when they can't defend their own policies, they try and make up some things about others who are questioning those policies. If you can't defend your policies, step down and move aside. Let's get some leadership in this province.

Let's face it: The only plan you've had for the private sector is your plan to use it to finance your spending binge. That's the same plan the Liberals had before you: Use the private sector and the taxpayers to finance a government spending binge. That's the only plan you've had. In a few weeks, every single man or woman who is lucky enough to still have a job in Ontario will feel what you're going to take out of their pocket in July.

We look at the bankruptcy figures: 353 new ones in April; 1,500 to date this year; 2,000 consumer bankruptcies in April; 8,000 individuals this year; 353 in companies alone this year. Everyone, because of your budget, is now going to pay more money.

I would like to ask you this simple question: What makes you think, after a 10-year record of Progressive Conservative, Liberal—in a monumental way—and then two years of your government, where government thought it could spend money better and fairer than individuals and families and taxpayers, what makes you think, after a 10-year record of disaster, that you now have a plan that you can spend the money better than taxpayers can?

1440

Hon Mr Rae: There might be some real basis for the member's questions if this government wasn't the first government in 50 years to actually be reducing program spending. So I find the premise of the question to be really quite out to lunch and quite out of keeping with the facts of the situation.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Order, the member for York Mills. New question, the member for Renfrew North.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for York Mills, please come to order. The member for Renfrew North has the floor.

ONTARIO HYDRO

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): My question today is for the Minister of Environment and Energy. In the last six months there have been some rather significant, I would say perhaps even dramatic,

developments at Ontario Hydro. I would like, just for a moment today, to turn the attention of the House to those developments and ask a couple of questions to the new Minister of Energy.

In the past number of months, we've seen at Ontario Hydro, among other developments, the following: The announcement that this year, the Hydro corporation will take at least a \$1-billion loss. They have announced next year's rate increase at 0%. They have announced that there will be at least 4,500 positions eliminated. There is a major restructuring of the grand old corporation. There is a dramatic change in the policy of private power acquisition.

Most recently, there has been a very interesting announcement that the Hydro corporation is embarking on an experimental deep discount policy to a certain number of selected big industrial power consumers.

Having regard to those and other developments, and accepting that this government has said that a hallmark of its energy policy is accountability, particularly for Ontario Hydro, would the Minister of Energy, on behalf of his government, be prepared today to indicate to the House and to the province that, under section 36 of Ontario Energy Board Act, he will refer all or some of these matters to the energy board for an independent adjudication of these issues, just to assure the public that these developments are, as we hope they will be, in the public interest?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): No.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "I can't find the page. No, I can't answer" is what he meant to say.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Somebody send him in an answer over there.

Hon Mr Wildman: The answer is no.

Mr Conway: I appreciate the answer. The answer is a declaratory no. I hope the member from Ottawa Centre doesn't choke as she hears that, because some of us remember a time when, for example—and I'll take a supplementary on just one issue.

The energy board act states in section 37 that where Ontario Hydro proposes to change any of its rates or charges, Hydro shall submit that proposal to the minister, who shall then submit that proposal to the energy board: "shall." That's what the energy board act says.

About six weeks ago, very quietly, the Rae cabinet passed a regulation that amends the impact of that section, giving Hydro an exemption from that accountability if those changes are deemed to be experimental. Now, in light of the long-standing position of the New Democratic Party that we've got to have a good independent adjudication of significant developments at Ontario Hydro, surely the minister understands that while this may be very good policy—in my view, I think a number of the developments are

quite positive—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place his question, please.

Mr Conway: —surely in the public interest there should be a reference of these issues, and, I'd ask specifically, if not of all of the issues, at least the issue of the so-called experimental deep discounting rates to big industrial users.

Would the minister not agree that that would be a timely and useful thing to do?

Hon Mr Wildman: The member is correct in his preamble to both his first and his second questions in saying that the corporation is right now experiencing and going through a significant restructuring of its operations which will affect the public, certainly the ratepayers, and the employees of Ontario Hydro.

The member is correct that when Ontario Hydro proposes a rate change to the minister, the minister can refer and should refer the matter to the Ontario Energy Board. In this case, Ontario Hydro is not doing that, and the member for Renfrew North knows that.

The corporation has suggested, on an experimental basis, looking at the possibility of a differential rate in relation to its major customers as they consume the surplus. The government has responded by saying that on an experimental basis—Mr Speaker, surely my first answer was concise. You can give me a little bit of time here.

The Speaker: I appreciate that, but perhaps the member could still conclude his response shortly.

Hon Mr Wildman: Well, after a one-word answer on the first one, to be hurried along on this one—

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Wildman: The point is this: In response to the proposal for an experimental approach, the government responded with a regulatory change that would facilitate that. If at any time the corporation proposes that kind of an approach on a permanent basis, that matter would then be subject to an Ontario Energy Board hearing.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a question for the minister responsible for auto insurance. Mr Minister, when you first introduced Bill 164, you promised the people of Ontario cheaper auto insurance premiums on the understanding that they withdraw their right to sue for economic loss. Thanks to the Treasurer adding a 5% tax on premiums, premiums will definitely not be going down. They will be increasing a maximum of 10% to 40%, depending on which studies you use, yours or of course the auto insurance companies'.

Bill 164 is a lose-lose situation for consumers of Ontario who rely of course on automobiles. Why are

you going ahead on a piece of legislation that is not only flawed but will mean only fewer options for accident victims and higher rates for consumers?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet and Government House Leader):

The member opposite seems to indicate that he and his colleagues in the Conservative caucus have forgotten the entire debate around Bill 68, the Liberal legislation which led us here. For the member opposite to talk about Bill 164 as a lose-lose situation when the current legislation, the Ontario motorist protection plan legislation, which they seem to be now defending, leaves without coverage virtually at all significant segments of the population of this province: children, students, homemakers, women who decide to take a few years off work to raise a family and those who in the middle of a recession like this one find themselves temporarily unemployed—people who under the current legislation are significantly left without coverage, this legislation will provide coverage to.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Hey, it's not right. They are covered. There is coverage.

Hon Mr Charlton: Yes, \$185 a week for life.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Bruce. Would the minister please take his seat.

Mr Elston: When he becomes an honest man, then I will be quiet.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Bruce knows that's not parliamentary language. I realize he'd like to ask a question, but would he please withdraw—

Mr Elston: When he's honest, I'll withdraw that.

The Speaker: I ask the member, first, to take his seat, and second, would he please withdraw the unparliamentary remark.

Mr Elston: I will withdraw but I will not stop interjecting while he refuses to tell us what the bill actually does.

The Speaker: Would the member please take his seat and would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Charlton: Very quickly, the members opposite, it would appear, would prefer to leave all of those people without any adequate coverage under the current legislation. It is possible that there will be small price increases associated with the passage of Bill 164, but it is a small price to pay to ensure that the people of this province, no matter who they are, have adequate coverage under their auto insurance legislation.

1450

Mr Tilson: At the very least, the small price increases that you're giving are 3% in the hidden premium tax your Treasurer gave last year and 5% this year. That's without even the flaws of Bill 164.

In committee, the committee members of the opposition have asked a number of questions on all of the areas that the minister has been putting forward, and, Mr Minister, your committee members, the government members, either refuse or won't answer the questions that we put to many of the flaws with respect to Bill 164. They simply won't answer or they're unable to answer.

Now you've prepared a motion as House leader to limit debate of Bill 164 for one day in committee and two hours in the House. Why are you proceeding with Bill 164 when you haven't even brought forward your amendments in the committee and they're so painfully unprepared to deal with the results of Bill 164?

Hon Mr Charlton: As is quite often the case, the member opposite is incorrect. All of our amendments have been tabled with the committee.

Mr Elston: That's not true. What is wrong with you? Why can you not tell the truth?

The Speaker: Order, the member for Bruce.

Mr Elston: Why can he not tell the truth?

Hon Mr Charlton: All of the legislative amendments have been tabled with the committee. The member refers to the fact that I've tabled a time allocation—

Mr Elston: That's not the issue.

The Speaker: The member for Bruce: I understand his concerns about the issue, but the honourable member knows that he should not be using that kind of language in the chamber and I would ask him to please simply withdraw.

Mr Elston: Mr Speaker, the issue is important, but the manner of the presentation of the material here is what really is getting me. We are supposed to tell the truth here. I have not heard it, but I will withdraw my question, which was, "Why can he not tell the truth?"

Hon Mr Charlton: I'll resist the temptation to respond to the member for Bruce and respond to the member who raised the question. The member referred to the fact that I've tabled a time allocation motion before the committee. That is because the opposition House leaders before Christmas agreed on a time schedule in the committee for two weeks of public hearings and one week of clause-by-clause during the intersession.

Since that time, I've allowed an additional three days and now a fourth day for the committee to deal with clause-by-clause and it's still only at clause 7 because the members of the Conservative and Liberal parties have been conducting an intentional and nonsensical filibuster. I must proceed and I will.

CLOSING OF TREE NURSERIES

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question, the member for Durham East.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Would the member take his seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Durham East with his question.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): My question this afternoon is to the Minister of Natural Resources, and it's about the Orono Nursery. About 18 months ago, the Orono tree nursery was threatened with closure and, through the intervention of the past Minister of Natural Resources, that was averted. Now, with the cuts in government spending—

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): Oh, come on.

Mr Mills: I want to ask my question, and he keeps shouting at me. It's awful. I want to hear my question. I'm fed up with it.

The Speaker: The member for Durham East—

Interjections.

Mr Mills: I'm shouted down.

The Speaker: Would the member for Durham East just relax. I ask the honourable member to direct his question to the minister.

Mr Mills: Mr Minister, we averted that trauma at the Orono tree nursery about 18 months ago. Things have calmed down. Now suddenly rumours are starting circulating again about the fate of the Orono tree nursery—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Simcoe West, please come to order.

Mr Mills: Mr Speaker, these rumours are circulating and I suspect I know where they're circulating, but I'll ask my question.

My question, Mr Minister: I want you this afternoon to stand in your place and tell me that there will be no job cuts at the Orono tree nursery, that there will be no reduction in staff and that people can go to bed tonight, sleep happily and get this thing off their chests. It's such a worry. Can you answer that? Can you give me that assurance?

Interjections.

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural Resources): I'll attempt to make myself heard over the noise on the other side.

Through the expenditure control plan we had to look at a number of Ministry of Natural Resources operations. We announced that we would close 18 small field offices and work stations at various locations around the province. We've completed that list of 18, and there will be no job losses associated with the closure of those small offices, although there will be significant savings.

I can tell the member that there is no plan to close the Orono tree nursery. I should say to the member that we will be looking at reducing in particular—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Etobicoke West.

Hon Mr Hampton: —levels of management within the Ministry of Natural Resources, and as we reduce some of the management numbers, that will have repercussions for the whole system, so that in the end some employees at the Orono nursery might be affected. I doubt it at this time very much.

The Speaker: Supplementary.

Mr Mills: Just to thank the minister for being honest and straightforward to the people I represent. Thank you, Mr Minister.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): In the absence of the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Health, I'd like to address my question to the junior Minister of Health.

On Thursday I raised the chaotic approach this government had taken with respect to its physician resources policy. That very afternoon the minister indicated through a letter, which was signed by her assistant deputy minister and written to Dr John Evans, that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mrs Sullivan: Mr Speaker, shall I redirect the question to the Minister of Health, who has finally arrived for question period?

That very afternoon the minister indicated through a letter which was signed by her assistant deputy minister to Dr John Evans—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I'm sorry to interrupt the member, but I cannot hear her question.

Mrs Sullivan: I will reiterate. Last Thursday I asked questions in the House with respect to the chaotic approach that the government has taken to physician resources in Ontario. That very afternoon the assistant deputy minister of health, Margaret Mottershead, signed a letter which indicates to Dr John Evans that the Minister of Health, "accepts the committee's package of recommendations totally," which was a totally different position than that which the minister had enunciated the day before. In the letter she says that there is an "explicit commitment" to the plan, but there is a caveat: The minister doesn't know if her cabinet colleagues will ratify the proposal.

I'd like to know if the Minister of Health will indicate to us if the recommendations of the Evans committee report will be ratified by the government and

accepted as the government's final policy statement on this issue.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Let me say to the member, I apologize for being late. I was in Niagara Falls speaking to the association of local health authorities and it took me longer to get back than I had planned, so I regret my absence.

Let me say to the member that I think the committee Dr Evans heads has done some very interesting and creative work in dealing with post-graduate—medical graduates and human resources management for the profession.

The recommendations they have made to me are ones I believe will lead us in the direction of being able to both manage our resources better as well as deal with the critical problems of underserved domains. I certainly feel it is a step forward from the rather blunt instrument of a 75% discounting, which was our initial proposal to the OMA—

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): That was your instrument for goodness' sake.

Hon Mrs Grier: —and I recognize it was my instrument, as we began negotiations.

The response of the committee is one that I think is preferable, and I will certainly be discussing that with my cabinet colleagues as soon as I can. I can assure the member that I will inform her of that conclusion as soon as I have it.

1500

Mrs Sullivan: Two weeks ago the minister was going to use exactly what she calls a blunt instrument to lock out all new paediatricians, GPs, family practitioners and psychiatrists by paying them only a quarter of what they have the right to earn under the negotiated fee schedule. Last Thursday night, the minister speculated that maybe other doctors and older doctors should be "discounted," and I use her word. Friday, we have a new position which accepts the Evans committee report, but once again with the caveat of not knowing whether she can get the agreement of her cabinet colleagues.

What is the position today? What is the government's policy on insuring that we have the right number of doctors in the right places with the right skills? What is your policy today?

Hon Mrs Grier: The policy of this government is to reform the health care system, and that to us, with respect to physician management, means making sure we have the right doctors in the right place. We do that through our discussions with the OMA, discussions and negotiations I am not going to have in this House. Our second policy is to maintain our fiscal targets and reduce the increase in expenditures on health care that under previous governments have been allowed to run unchecked.

I'm confident that we can do both of those things and

at the same time ensure that underserved areas, whether they be populations or regions of the north, that I know colleagues on all sides of the House have been concerned about for a very many years, will in fact be dealt with, and I'm confident that this will be the outcome of our discussions with the OMA.

PHOTO RADAR

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): My question is to the Solicitor General. How are you planning to handle the implications of photo radar to car rental agencies?

Hon David Christopherson (Solicitor General): That question would rightfully belong to the Minister of Transportation, but he's not in the House, so I'll attempt to answer. My understanding is that we would attempt to deal with that in the same fashion that one now deals with parking tickets, wherein people who own the cars are responsible for those tickets, not the people who are driving them.

Mr Turnbull: Quite obviously, that's just simply abdicating any dealing with it at all. That is a problem for those car rental agencies, and quite clearly we make ourselves more uncompetitive in the tourist market when we do that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Turnbull: I've got a specific suggestion to you as to how you can mitigate this. I would suggest you develop a form the agency would get the customers to sign which would pre-authorize their acceptance of responsibility for the ticket and would also authorize withdrawal from a credit card for anything which may be incurred by way of charges.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Turnbull: That is a way of making sure you don't harm the businesses of Ontario, the hundreds and hundreds of small rental agencies that are already burdened with a lot of government red tape. Will you do that?

Hon Mr Christopherson: I don't understand the question. Sorry, Mr Speaker. There's been so much commotion in the House today I've had a great deal of difficulty listening to the member, and he is on the other side of the House. If I could hear the essence of the question again, I will be glad to attempt to answer it.

The Speaker: Could the member briefly place his question, and it would be helpful—

Interjections.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Speaker, I cannot—I must—if he doesn't—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. There was a considerable amount of noise in the chamber. I had trouble hearing

the question. I would ask all members to please allow the member to place his question.

Mr Turnbull: You have added a considerable amount of red tape to the administration of car rental companies by doing this. You also injure the tourism business by adding extra costs which will be distributed across all people who rent cars. A solution that I'm offering to you, Minister, is quite simply to create a form on which auto agencies would undertake on your behalf, the government's behalf, to get a signature from those people who are renting. This form would automatically make the onus on the person renting and would pre-authorize on behalf of the government a deduction from any credit card for any amounts which would be owing, rather than spreading it across the cost of renting all cars. Will you do this?

Hon Mr Christopherson: I'm glad I asked for the question to be repeated and clarified, because it's what I thought the first time when I heard the pieces of it through the roar on the other side.

The reality is that essentially what the member is talking about is exactly what we are planning to do, which as I understand it is very similar to what is done with parking tickets. So there's no intent to put an onus on business. There's going to be an opportunity—

Mr Turnbull: You're doing nothing with parking tickets. It's the responsibility of the car agency.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Christopherson: Mr Speaker, I really question whether the member wants to hear an answer to a question or whether he just wants to make a lot of noise here today.

Mr Turnbull: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: The suggestion by the minister completely distorts what I have said. The government does not take any responsibility to—

The Speaker: The member does not have a point of privilege.

WASTE REDUCTION

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): My question is for the Chair of Management Board. I believe that this government takes seriously the need to control garbage, because the materials we throw away are valuable, because our environment is damaged by the excessive extraction of resources from it and because there's really no satisfactory way of disposing of garbage. Could the minister tell us what this government is doing to support the measures that the Minister of Environment and Energy recently announced around the 3Rs program?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I thank the member for Peterborough for the question. The government of Ontario has undertaken what I can only describe as the largest 3Rs program taken on by any institution in

North America. We have attempted through the way that we've proceeded with our program to try and provide leadership to the private sector and to the public at large. We have, through the reduction of some 7,700 tonnes of waste each year over the course of the last several years, saved between \$3 million and \$4 million in tipping fees at landfill sites across the province. We've established composting sites at some 30 institutions. We've used over 8,000 tonnes of recycled paper, saving roughly 68,000 trees, and recently we've initiated the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Charlton: In recent days, we've had as many as 87,000 government employees in 760 locations across the province involved in the green workplace program and involved in reducing waste in government operations.

1510

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm serving notice of my dissatisfaction with the answer provided by the Minister of Environment and Energy to my question. I'll be happy to debate it later in the week.

The Speaker: I trust that the member will file the necessary document with the table.

PETITIONS

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario re Bill 38, an amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act to permit wide-open Sunday shopping and eliminate Sunday as a legal holiday.

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38. We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principle of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding when they must work and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man. It dates from God's creation and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all people, both physically and spiritually. We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

It's signed by 114 residents of the province and I've affixed my signature.

POLLUTION CONTROL

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I have a petition signed by the residents of my riding which says:

"We have been residents of southeast Oakville since 1974 and have been increasingly concerned about the pollution being emitted from the St Lawrence Cement plant and we request that testing of contaminants in the dust be done."

GAMBLING

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I have a petition from the St James-Rosemount United Church and it's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it states:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before.

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

SENIORS' HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I've been provided with a petition from Margaret Brocklebank, who is the secretary of the Streetsville Senior Citizens' Club 111, and the members would like to express their concern regarding changes proposed to the Ontario drug benefit program. They are concerned that the changes may result in user fees for seniors and it's my pleasure to sign this petition on their behalf.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and Grenville, members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 441, Brockville and Area Centre for Developmentally Handicapped Persons Inc, in Brockville, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public service."

I'm affixing my signature in support.

CLOSURE OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I have a petition here addressed to Premier Rae, Treasurer Laughren, Minister Buchanan:

"We, the undersigned, request that you seriously consider reversing your decision to close New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology."

It's signed by about 99 constituents and I'll affix my signature to this too.

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition addressed to the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas there are many cases in which mothers have not abused or neglected their children and are treated unfairly;

"Whereas children's aid societies do not recognize single mothers and children as a family unit;

"Whereas single mothers lose all rights once their children become crown wards; and

"Whereas some case workers of children's aid societies have lack of communication with single mothers; and

"Whereas children's aid societies, in placing the children in relief homes, reduce meaningful visits with their mothers; and

"Whereas children's aid societies plan visits at their discretion and not in the best interests of the children; and

"Whereas parents of the children's aid societies should be screened before becoming foster parents; and

"Whereas the words 'the best interests of the children' are not fully defined by the children's aid society and in our courts; and

"Whereas single mothers are becoming victims of children's aid societies in losing all access to their children;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to have the children's aid societies investigated when the children become crown wards at the discretion of the children's aid society, for the purpose that the visitations are being removed from the mothers and their children, to allow the courts to have more say for mothers and their children to remain as a family, and to have children's parents of the children's aid society screened before becoming foster parents."

That's signed by some 523 signatures and I have signed the petition.

GAMBLING

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a petition which has been signed by about 20 people in Bloomingdale, Maryhill, Kitchener, Waterloo and London.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I hereby affix my signature.

BICYCLING SAFETY

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I have a petition against the mandatory requirement for individuals to wear a helmet while riding a bicycle, and it's to the Speaker of the House and the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the undersigned, support the voluntary use of bicycle helmets promoted as part of a comprehensive bicycle safety program; and

"Whereas we, the undersigned, oppose the province's plan to mandate the use of bicycle helmets as being an excessive restriction of personal rights to choose for ourselves as guaranteed under the Constitution;

"We respectfully submit this petition for your consideration."

GAMBLING

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised

by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I have signed the petition.

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition signed by 25 members of the congregation of St John's Church, Ida, in my riding:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I have affixed my signature.

1520

COMMUNITY RECREATION FUNDING

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition signed by 100 school children at St George's school in Long Sault, Ontario, which asks the government to support the construction of the Long Sault Centennial Arena. The petition reads:

"We, the youth and our families, along with the members of our community, have been working very hard to raise a portion of the moneys needed to rebuild our well-used arena. We need government funding to help. Unfortunately, we can't do it alone. We need our arena."

I fully support the petition and affix my signature and applaud the efforts of the St George's school children and their teachers.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Gov-

ernor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and Grenville, members of Ontario Public Service Employees Union Local 440 employed by the Ministry of the Attorney General in Brockville, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of the public services."

I have affixed my signature in support.

GAMBLING

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): I have a petition respectfully submitted to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by 24 Middlesex residents who ask that the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos in the province of Ontario.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I have quite a massive petition here, primarily signed by the folks from the town of Englehart in the riding of Timiskaming, and it says in regard to health care in northern Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, wish to strongly suggest the following recommendations:

"(1) Governmental officials legislate doctors to practise in northern Ontario by making northern postings a part of their curriculum. This could be a way of paying back subsidies given them, government grants, community sponsorship etc.

"(2) Issue a number of licences to southern Ontario and an equal number per capita to the north.

"(3) Open up immigration practices again to allow foreign doctors to practise in Canada. This practise has worked well in the past.

"Where there is a lack of governmental services, there is no community. Because we have chosen to live in the rural north, we should not be penalized. The closing of small northern Ontario hospitals and the reduction of government funding that causes bed closures is not the only answer to the health care crisis. As it is, when beds are needed in the southern hospitals for patients requiring specialist care, the wait is long, as it is in the list of patients awaiting beds. If more hospitals and beds close, these hospitals will be even further overloaded. The cost of increased transfers will escalate, along with the number of people requiring travel grants and other types of assistance.

"In addition, the north cannot afford to shoulder the

burden of reduced income in any way of lost jobs. What we need is more doctors in the north to keep the facilities and services operational."

I affix my name to this petition.

LANDFILL

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I have a petition here:

"Whereas the town of Georgina has traditionally been a mixture of agricultural, residential and recreation/vacation lands; and

"Whereas these areas would drastically be affected by a megadump; and

"Whereas the Interim Waste Authority has identified sites in the town that would consume large tracts of number 1 and 2 farm land, the areas identified by the Interim Waste Authority would disrupt the vibrant agricultural communities and farm families in these areas that have continued to invest large sums of money in their farms; and

"Whereas these communities would be destroyed by the Interim Waste Authority putting in a megadump; and

"Whereas most of the people in Georgina depend on groundwater for their drinking water supply and a dump would threaten their clean supply of drinking water; and

"Whereas Lake Simcoe is the ice fishing capital of the world; and

"Whereas Lake Simcoe provides a strong draw for tourists year round; and

"Whereas the effects of a megadump would destroy the local economies in the community;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"We oppose the Interim Waste Authority's proposal to take prime farm land and turn it into York-Metro's megadump.

"We further petition the Legislative Assembly to renew its efforts to seek alternatives like waste reprocessing to landfill and implementation of progressive reduction, reuse and recycling programs."

I affix my name to this petition like the many people who were out in front of the Legislature this weekend at a GAG rally.

GAMBLING

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have another petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in

individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I have signed the petition.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): Pursuant to standing order 60(a), I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on estimates on the estimates selected and not selected by the standing committee for consideration for the fiscal year 1993-94.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals (Mr Alex D. McFedries): Mr Jackson from the standing committee on estimates presents the committee's report as follows:

Pursuant to Standing order 59, your committee has selected the estimates of the following ministries and offices for consideration:

Ministry of Agriculture and Food, seven hours and 30 minutes; Ministry of Housing, seven hours and 30 minutes—

Mr Jackson: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Agreed?

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): No, no, carry on.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals: Ministry of Health, 10 hours;

Ministry of Labour, five hours;

Office responsible for women's issues, seven and a half hours;

Office of francophone affairs, seven and a half hours;

Ministry of Education and Training, seven and a half hours;

Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, seven and a half hours;

Ministry of Community and Social Services, 10 hours;

Ministry of Natural Resources, five hours;

Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, seven and a half hours;

Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation, seven and a half hours.

Pursuant to standing order 60, the estimates of the

following ministries and offices not selected for consideration are deemed passed by the committee and reported to the House in accordance with the terms of the standing order and deemed to be received and concurred in.

Ministry of the Attorney General: law officer of the crown, \$261,832,257; ministry administration program, \$27,949,700; guardian and trustee services, \$20,794,400; crown legal services, \$99,552,500; legislative counsel services, \$4,272,300; courts administration, \$291,395,200; administrative tribunals, \$26,978,100; special investigations unit, \$2,099,400.

Cabinet Office: Cabinet Office program, \$5,775,100; Premier's councils, \$4,565,100.

Ministry of Citizenship: ministry administration, \$5,496,765; program support, \$26,371,400; anti-racism strategy, \$8,478,900; disability and seniors' issues, \$15,516,100; ministry agencies, \$21,566,100.

Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations: ministry administration, \$23,876,457; business practices, \$14,804,200; technical standards, \$18,211,300; registration, \$72,425,200; agencies, \$43,474,900; casino development, \$2,960,500.

Ministry of Environment and Energy: ministry administration program, \$43,585,173; environmental services, \$114,500,000; environmental control, \$104,679,600; utility planning and operations, \$217,795,200; energy planning and development, \$26,001,700.

1530

Ministry of Finance: ministry administration program, \$57,099,907; treasury and controllership, \$7,155,977,000; taxation and intergovernmental finance policy, \$7,048,000; economic policy, \$21,215,600; treasury board, \$449,549,500; office of the budget, \$1,004,100; financial standards, \$50,167,800; tax administration, \$202,260,400; property assessment, \$109,293,900; Province of Ontario Savings Office, \$12,403,100.

Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs: ministry administration program, \$2,425,808; federal and interprovincial relations, \$5,738,100.

Office of the Lieutenant Governor: Office of the Lieutenant Governor program, \$662,000.

Management Board Secretariat: ministry administration program, \$29,577,107; realty services, \$377,832,500; supply and services, \$65,574,600; computer and telecommunication services, \$15,406,500; human resources, information technology and management policy, \$64,345,800.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs: ministry administration, \$6,519,507; municipal policy, \$9,266,600; municipal operations, \$950,980,300; Ontario municipal audit, \$1,809,800; Ontario Municipal Board, \$7,967,100; office for the greater Toronto area, \$1,717,400; board of

negotiation, \$143,200; waterfront regeneration trust, \$1,916,900.

Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat: Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat program, \$18,343,608.

Office of the Premier: Office of the Premier program, \$2,363,748.

Ministry of the Solicitor General and Correctional Services: ministry administration program, \$59,238,165; public safety, \$46,619,300; policing services, \$22,787,300; Ontario Provincial Police, \$498,076,400; correctional services, \$563,088,700.

Ministry of Transportation: ministry administration program, \$35,591,857; policy and planning, \$18,775,300; safety and regulation, \$109,592,000; program delivery, \$595,122,900.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Pursuant to standing order 60(b), the report of the committee is deemed to be received, and the estimates of the ministries and offices named therein as not being selected for consideration are deemed to be concurred in.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

GEORGIAN-SIMCOE

RAILWAY COMPANY LIMITED ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr J. Wilson, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr27, An Act respecting Georgian-Simcoe Railway Company Limited.

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): Do I get a short explanation on the bill?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): It's a private bill, so there are no introductory remarks.

MINING AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES MINES

On motion by Mr Chiarelli, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 43, An Act to amend the Mining Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les mines.

WAUBAUSHENE

RAILWAY COMPANY LIMITED ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Waters, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr32, An Act respecting the Waubausheene Railway Company Limited.

PICTON-TRENTON

RAILWAY COMPANY LIMITED ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Paul Johnson, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr29, An Act respecting Picton-Trenton Railway Company Limited.

WATERLOO-ST JACOBS

RAILWAY COMPANY LIMITED ACT, 1993

On motion by Mrs Witmer, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr31, An Act respecting Waterloo-St Jacobs Railway Company Limited.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Orders of the day.

EXTENDED HOURS OF MEETING

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): Mr Speaker, I would like to rise on a point of order with respect to government notice of motion number 2, which is also on the order paper as orders of the day today, which motion, as I'm sure you are aware, states: "That, notwithstanding standing order 9, the House shall continue to meet from 6 pm to 12 midnight on June 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, and 24" etc.

That, of course, is the usual motion that is passed some time before the last eight sessional days of the parliamentary calendar. I would submit to you, Mr Speaker, that that motion in this particular case, as it's worded, is out of order. The reason I submit that to you, sir, is that on May 10, 1993, in this place the government proposed a motion, which was unanimously passed, "...that, notwithstanding any standing order of the House, the House meet in the morning of Wednesday, June 9, 1993, for the consideration of private members' public business, and when the House adjourns that day, it shall stand adjourned until Monday, June 14, 1993, and that Monday, June 14, 1993, be not considered as one of the last eight sessional days in June for the purposes as set out in the standing orders."

My submission to you very simply, Mr Speaker, is that this House having passed on May 10 unanimous motion that June 14 was not to be considered one of the last eight sessional days, it is clearly out of order for the government today to introduce a motion including June 14 as one of the last eight sessional days and therefore granting permission to sit from 6 pm until 12 midnight.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I agree with that in the sense that I understand the House has the opportunity to do whatever it does wish to do with the standing orders, but it seems to me, having given precedence to one change in the standing orders, with the consent of the people here, because there were special arrangements being made because of the Thursday early rising this week of the House, we have agreed that the last eight days not include June 14 because that means the government can actually do certain other business, ie, they can actually introduce a bill which they can require to be dealt with in those last eight days otherwise. It seems to me, therefore, because the previous motion, which now must be given precedence and priority over the standing orders, has taken away June 14 as a day of one of the last eight sessional days, that we can no longer be asked to comply with the rest of the standing order which tells us that we can have a motion, almost a right—it has a two-hour debate time limit as you know—that will require us to sit evenings, the reason being that June 14 now is available for the government

to do business that it would otherwise be excluded from doing, ie, introducing more legislation for the last eight sessional days.

Mr Speaker, I think that therefore means that this particular motion is indeed out of order because we're dealing with something other than the last eight sessional days, as the standing orders have been amended by prior agreement of the House.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): It's an interesting but expected position that the two opposition House leaders put.

I should, I guess, point out to you, Mr Speaker, that the business which the House leader of the opposition referred to as business that we wouldn't otherwise be able to do on June 14, we seek to do in order to accommodate the wishes of the third party not to sit on the Thursday so that its members can attend the convention.

But all that aside, there is no point of order here. The motion, as the House leader of the third party has indicated, which was passed on May 10, is a valid motion. The House also has a right to pass a subsequent motion which will in effect change that order because it will be an order of the House.

The motion that stands framed before you today, the one that hopefully I will be moving in a few minutes, is a motion which deals with standing order 9 and standing order 9 alone. The other parts of the motion passed on May 10 will still stand and be valid. But in any event, there's nothing out of order. The House has the perfect right to debate a motion and to order its business, and that's what I'm requesting we do this afternoon, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: The three House leaders have given me something to think about, because indeed I find that the member from Parry Sound's arguments with respect to the previous order declaring that the 14th would not be included cause me some concern when the government then wishes to pass a new motion that includes the 14th in the number of days for evening sittings.

I think that under the circumstances it would be best to pause for a few moments. I think 10 minutes would be sufficient. If the current motion is permissible, it would allow enough time to complete the debate, and if it's not permissible we will go on with other business. So this House stands in recess for 10 minutes.

The House recessed at 1543 and resumed at 1554.

The Speaker: First, before addressing the point of order, I realize that all members in the assembly make every effort to do the public business as expeditiously as possible, and sometimes extra hours are required in order to do that.

The member for Parry Sound has indeed raised a valid point of order. There was a special order of this House which indicated that June 14 was not to be considered as one of the eight sessional days during

which time the hours could be extended.

The question of the point of order rests on the wording of the motion which was placed at that time.

The government may wish to come back to this House tomorrow with a new, revised motion, with suitable notice and placed on the order paper, so that it in fact can be debated and would stand in order. But I must, under the circumstances, find that the honourable member for Parry Sound indeed is correct, that he has a valid point of order and that the motion is not in order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PAY EQUITY AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'ÉQUITÉ SALARIALE

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for third reading of Bill 102, An Act to amend the Pay Equity Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'équité salariale.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I believe the member for Waterloo North had the floor last when we completed the debate.

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): Yes, Mr Speaker. When the House adjourned on May 12, I was speaking to the pay equity bill. At that time I was reviewing some of the communications I had received from people throughout the province, both in the form of written letters and verbal communication, regarding their concerns about Bill 102, the pay equity legislation. I would just like to add again that there has been a tremendous amount of concern expressed regarding this issue.

The first letter I had dealt with that day was a letter from the YWCA of Kitchener-Waterloo. It was a letter to the Honourable Bob Mackenzie and was dated February 15, 1993. In speaking to the bill, they mentioned, "We strongly support your government's proposal to extend the implementation period of pay equity to 1988," in order that they don't have to reduce their service and in order that they don't have to lay off their staff.

That was the concern they were bringing to our attention. If they were forced to go ahead with the implementation of pay equity at the present time, because of the economic recession and the fact that they are struggling to meet their needs, the cost of pay equity was going to result in layoffs and service cuts to the YWCA. As a result, the women this bill is supposed to help were the women who were going to be suffering from the cutbacks, as well as the children. It was the women and the children who need the emergency housing who were going to be the ones who were going to suffer as a result of the implementation of pay equity.

The Y also indicated that it had concern about the implementation of pay equity by proxy comparison and it urged the minister to examine the effect of pay equity

upon the internal equity within a place of employment. They felt that by adjusting one or more female-dominated positions to a male-dominated comparator position that may be compensated at an inflated wage or salary, the equity among many or all positions may be disturbed significantly, thus bringing about conditions which are certainly contrary to the intention of this act.

That concern had been brought to our attention by numerous sectors throughout the province, including the nurses and the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses. It appears that the cost of this pay equity bill is certainly going to be greater than any benefits that could accrue to the women in this province.

I'd now like to focus on the next interest group reaction, and that is the reaction from the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, which has some very legitimate concerns about the pay equity bill. They have indicated that when one considers the amount of resources expended to implement legislated pay equity and the results achieved, one must question the value of the entire initiative.

A recent study indicated that more resources were expended to implement pay equity than were expended to make the required wage adjustments. That was a study by Sibson in 1990. Certainly, I have heard from many other groups in this province that have said the same thing: The resources to implement pay equity were greater than those required to make the necessary wage adjustments. I'd like to give just one example, and that is the Kidd Creek mines. They spent \$216,000 on consultants and lawyers, because they're the people who do the job, to put only \$215,000 in the pocket of the working women, the people whom the legislation was intended to help.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association goes on to say that companies which have, in good faith, followed the legislation thus far and have implemented pay equity are now going to find, because of this bill, that they have to go back and address any female job classes for which there were no male comparators. In doing this, if the company addresses only the jobs for which there are no male comparators, it could skew the entire compensation system. They also say that Bill 102 will require many companies to expend more resources, again to ensure compliance with the proportional value amendments.

1600

They go on to say that it is far too late in the game to require employers to reopen or change their pay equity plans to require proportional value comparisons, and then say that government must also recognize—and this is a very important point I'm going to be making—that over the last five years, certainly during the time the Liberals have been in power, and now the NDP, the employers of this province have been hit with

an onslaught of legislation, an onslaught of regulatory reform, high taxation and other initiatives which have had a very negative impact on their ability to compete.

Changes are occurring, or they have already occurred, in the area of labour relations; in employment standards; in workers' compensation, which has an unfunded liability of \$11 billion; in occupational health and safety, which has tremendous new costs for employers; employment equity; taxation—employer health tax; and the environment. The list goes on and on and on. It is time to stop, they say, the regulatory production line and it is time to let the manufacturers and the employers of this province deal with the current regulatory framework, and of course get on with the job of creating new jobs for the people in this province who are so desperately looking for them.

The final point they make is that although proxy comparisons will create serious administrative problems, their main concern pertains to the costs. That's something this government should know it can't ignore, as it is presently trying to reduce its deficit by \$2 billion through negotiations with the unions, and so far very unsuccessfully. The only thing that's happened in this province is that we've had greater uncertainty created than ever before in the life of this province. I can't believe it when I walk down the streets in my riding or when the phone rings. This social contract discussion has created a tremendous amount of uncertainty in this province, and people are concerned that it's going to somehow impact on them. I would hope that the government resolves this issue as quickly as possible.

The government is already in a financial crisis, and proxy comparison is only going to exacerbate the problem. Therefore, the manufacturers' association concludes by saying, "Do not introduce a proxy comparison system into the legislation." We know that proxy comparison is only for the public sector. It's only going to make their costs higher.

I'd now like to quote from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business in a letter that it wrote to the Treasurer, Floyd Laughren, on November 27, 1992.

"The Canadian Federation of Independent Business is deeply concerned by the double-standard approach of the Ontario government to the issue of pay equity. The announcement of yesterday, November 26, to delay the implementation of Bill 168 came complete with the rationale that the economy was too weak at this time.

"The weak economy your government faces is the same one that thousands of small firms fight against for survival. Accordingly, these firms, these small firms, should receive the same consideration as others in the public policy process.

"Therefore, in addition to delaying Bill 168, the federation requests you also delay the implementation of pay equity in firms with 10 to 49 employees from

January 1, 1993, to a time when the economy is more able to accommodate it. This measure would be especially welcome in view of the fact that these small firms are least equipped to handle the burdensome and costly administrative and regulatory process of Ontario's complex pay equity system in such difficult economic times."

That sums up the position of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. They are concerned about that double-standard approach, and it's an issue that I discussed on May 12 in my comments. The government is certainly not being fair when it pushes back its own implementation time line and totally fails to disregard—the private sector has the same financial struggle to cope with as the government does. Certainly, in all fairness, they should take a look at delaying the implementation time line as well, and they should remember it is the small business community that creates new jobs in this province, and at the present time, as I've said before, it's jobs that our people are looking for.

Finally, one more interest group reaction to pay equity—this is the fourth—and this is from the Equal Pay Coalition, which is not happy either with the bill:

"In particular, we are dismayed by the government's decision to extend the final payout date for pay equity until 1988. We feel that it is shameless for the government to be using this legislation, which is the fulfilment of promises made by this government during several elections, as an opportunity to diminish rights previously achieved by working women. We do not believe that this giving with the one hand and taking away with the other is justified by our present difficult economic circumstances.

"The coalition does not accept the proxy methodology introduced in Bill 102, on the basis that it is inconsistent with one of the fundamental principles of pay equity, specifically, the principle that female job classes should be compared to male job classes."

The coalition proposed a cross-establishment method of comparison as an alternative.

I think you can see there is widespread opposition to the pay equity bill that is before us at the present time. Certainly, the concern does focus on the proxy methodology. There seems to be universal opposition, almost, to that method being used in the comparison.

I think I also would like to make the point at this time that pay equity isn't and doesn't totally explain the wage difference. If we're going to really understand the wage difference, we need to look at a few other factors, and three of them are education, hours worked and marriage, because those are very essential to our understanding.

In a *Globe and Mail* article in January 1993, reference was made to a Statistics Canada report of 1991, and in that report it indicated that women's wages rose

to 69.6% of men's from 67.6% the year before. That's a 2% increase. But what does this 2% increase mean? It doesn't mean women are being paid nearly one third less to do the same job, even though there are some within this government who suggest that men are being paid one third more to do precisely the same job as a woman within the same company.

What these statistics also show, what we would expect, is that since society's attitudes towards woman's work and education have changed only relatively recently, the difference in average wages would be least among the young. We find that while the full-time working woman over age 55 earned 63.6% of the income of her male counterpart in the same age bracket, the same woman who is younger and aged 15 to 24 earned an average of 86.4% as much as a man in the same age group. That is 23% more between women over age 55 and women between the ages of 15 and 24. So you can see that age is making a difference as far as the payment for women in jobs is concerned.

1610

Also, if you look further, you see that education does play a very critical role as far as the wage gap is concerned. Women today with a university degree earned more, not less, than men with lower levels of education. If you take into consideration the fact—and I'm still quoting now from the *Statistics Canada* poll of 1991 that was found in the *Globe and Mail* article of January 1993. When you remember that a majority of those enrolled in Canadian universities are female—indeed 55.3% of the full- and part-time students are women—it is obvious that according to the trends that have been established, the wage difference is going to continue to narrow, and it's not going to narrow because of pay equity; it's going to narrow because of the increased accessibility of education for women.

Unfortunately, this government and its cutbacks to universities and colleges is going to prevent some women from accessing post-secondary education and, as a result, it's going to prevent them from accessing those higher-paid jobs. They need to give very careful consideration to what they're doing when they implement those cutbacks to the universities and the colleges, because it also almost always appears that it's women who suffer the most from any cutbacks that this government is making.

Marital status also impacts the wage gap. There is already only a small wage gap between single men and women. In 1991, single women's average earnings were 91.1% of those of their male counterparts. For some women, there was even less of a difference. For women aged 35 to 44, their income was 94.5% of that earned by men of the same age. Indeed, if we look at the most educated members of that age group, single females with a university degree, women actually made 6%

more than single 35- to 44-year-old uneducated men. I think what's happening throughout this province is that women are going back to university and college and they are, as a result, accessing the higher-paid jobs. As a result, we're going to see that wage gap narrow in the future.

Statistics also show us that women now hold almost half of all management and professional jobs in Canada. Between 1985 and 1990, the number of women in the high-paying fields in Canada rose 53%, while men rose only 1%.

It is obvious, if you take a look at this report, that women have made very significant gains since the 1980s and I think it's quite obvious as well that it isn't because of pay equity. It's because of increased educational opportunities for women, and certainly marital status has an impact as well. That's something the government needs to remember, and I would hope that they would focus more of their resources on providing educational opportunities and training opportunities for women in this province. I understand, if you take a look at the statistics of Jobs Ontario, that there are far fewer women who are accessing these programs at the present time, and I think this government needs to reprioritize and take a look at what it can do for women in creating new job opportunities through Jobs Ontario.

This government should also remember that people need to be free to make choices, parents need to be free to make choices. Although the government presses for universal day care, it is ignoring the women who feel that the tax system is unfair to families where one spouse chooses to stay at home.

I believe that this government, along with its federal counterpart, needs to take a look at the issue of pensions. There is certainly strong public support that homemakers should be allowed to participate in the Canada pension plan. The all-invest Gallup poll several years ago showed 73% support for this.

However, to date there has been no widely accepted method of allowing homemakers into the Canada pension plan. Unfortunately, women today who choose to devote their lives to raising their children and keeping house for their husbands are the ones who suffer the most from the inadequacies of our pension system. If women are truly to have equity, more than just pay equity, we must recognize their equal contribution to the marriage as well as the homemakers' contribution to the country's economy, and this government should work with its federal counterparts to do everything possible to implement a pension plan so that the older women who today are living in poverty do not need to do so in the future.

I'd like to also indicate that I'm disappointed that the government still seems intent on addressing some of the perceived imbalances in a given profession or a given job through quotas or setting lower standards for

women. Not only do these measures border on discrimination, which is something that women in this province have long decried, but they also imply that women cannot make the grade without a head start. I believe that everybody in this province should be encouraged to do whatever they can to seek out women and encourage them and to allow them to develop their potential to their fullest and then make sure that they are well equipped for the job. If this is done, a giant step would be taken towards equal opportunity.

Again, I go back to education and training. I believe that's where this government should focus its attention. If we're going to eliminate the wage gap between men and women, we need to make sure that women have the same educational and training opportunities as men. Only then are we going to have true equal opportunities in this province, and obviously, the more capable the female applicants for any job, the more difficult it's going to be for even the most regressive elements in this province to ignore them. That's where I believe the government needs to focus its attention at the present time: in the area of education and training and providing the equal opportunity for men and women. I would suggest that they take a look at their Jobs Ontario program to see how many women compared to men are getting an opportunity for access to new job positions.

At this time, I'd like to summarize some of the concerns that I have expressed regarding pay equity. I'd like to say that I believe all of us on both sides of the House should do everything possible we can to ensure that women and men do have equal representation and status and opportunity in pay equity, and we should do everything we can to create a society in this province through consensus and compromise which allows the unique differences in the talents and desires of each male and female to be celebrated.

However, I'd like to indicate to you, as we draw this debate on the Pay Equity Amendment Act to a close, Bill 102, in this third reading of the bill, as we discuss the issue of reimbursing women with equal pay for work of equal value, a principle, by the way, which I have indicated before that the PC Party does support, we do have some very serious concerns about this legislation. I talked about them on May 12 and I've talked about them today, and we really do question whether indeed this bill which is before us does support the principle. As a result, I'd just like to summarize some of the concerns that we have at the present time.

Unfortunately, because of the cuts in services that have been occurring across the province, women who might have benefited from pay equity have instead been losing their jobs, so it appears that at the present time there is absolutely no net gain whatsoever.

1620

It is extremely unfortunate that this government, since it was elected in 1990, has not focused upon job cre-

ation as a priority; not that the government create jobs, but it should have been creating an environment for the private sector to create the jobs. We know it is the private sector and we know it is the small business entrepreneur that create the jobs in this province, and unfortunately, that's not happening, and as a result women have lost many of the benefits, because they appear to be the people who are eliminated first from the payroll, who are at the bottom of the scale.

Although we might see some gains being made within the public sector, we've seen so many cutbacks made by this government, we've seen so much downloading to the municipalities and the universities and the school boards and the hospitals, that as a result it has been women who are losing their jobs. This loss of jobs for women has been particularly unfortunate, and this pay equity bill is not going to make that situation any better. In fact, we have heard from those in the public sector that indeed they're going to have to cut their services further if pay equity is forced upon them because they simply don't have the resources to meet the needs they're expected to meet. Again, often-times it's the needs of the women and children that are not going to be met, so we certainly can't support the bill on that point.

I think I've mentioned also the fact that there's a double standard that this legislation creates: There is a different time line for the private sector as opposed to the public sector. The PC caucus did attempt to introduce an amendment for the small business community which would push back the first pay equity adjustment date for companies with 99 or fewer employees to January 1, 1998. Currently, as we know, it's January 1, 1993. In introducing this amendment, our caucus wanted to correct the double standard that the government had established, because the bill extends the time lines for the government and its payment schedule in the area of pay equity but it totally neglected to take into consideration that the same economic hardships that were being faced by the government were also being faced by the business sector in this province, particularly the small business sector. They're just struggling to keep on their feet and out of bankruptcy. We heard today from our leader, Mr Harris, about the increase in bankruptcies that we still continue to see at the present time.

Unfortunately, the government defeated our amendment to help the small business community and push back the first pay equity adjustment date for companies with 99 or fewer employees to January 1, 1998, and as we know, the Liberals voted with the NDP against our amendment. We're very concerned that this government continues to place demands on the private sector, demands that it refuses to place upon itself. Certainly, what they have here is a double standard.

We're also opposed to the legislation because it adds another cost of doing business in this province. Just as

workers' compensation is a burden for people in this province, the new taxation that's been introduced by the government in the form of \$2 billion is going to be a tremendous cost to business people in this province. Pay equity legislation, for some people, is going to be the final blow, and it's something they simply can't afford at the present time. They know they don't have the expertise, they know they're going to have to hire consultants and lawyers to do the job, and we know that many times the cost of hiring those individuals is more than the actual implementation of pay equity.

For that reason, we certainly have a lot of concern with this legislation, and again I go back to one of the original points I made. We're very concerned with the proxy comparison, and most groups in this province appear to be.

For that reason, I would like to indicate to you that as a result of the concerns that have been raised by women's groups, business groups, employee groups, community groups, non-profit groups, as a result of that concern about the Pay Equity Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 102, we will be voting against this bill when it comes before this House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin):
Questions or comments?

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): It was an interesting speech from the member for Waterloo North. She talked about how her party supports the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. She didn't say when they were going to support it. It's great to say that in principle you support it, and then she says, well, her caucus is going to vote against this piece of legislation. When are they going to support it? Are they going to support it in this century? Are they going to wait till the next century? Are they going to wait till the century after for it to occur?

The speaker from Waterloo North said it should come about as a result of consensus and compromise. All of us wish it had come about that way; it would have been great if it had. The point is that it hasn't come about that way, and many women are still, in many, many jobs, doing the same work and, in some cases, probably doing more work and getting paid less.

The other comment the member for Waterloo North made was about the small business community and how this government hasn't been supportive of the small business community. I say getting rid of the tire tax and the commercial concentration tax is probably very supportive of the small business community.

I think the member for Waterloo North was remiss in not mentioning her colleagues up in Ottawa and what they've done in harming the small business community and throwing a lot of women out of work because of their high interest rate policy, the difference in real interest rates between this country and our neighbours

to the south, and small businesses trying to compete in a free trade environment with the United States, with higher interest rates at the federal level.

Then you have the governor of the Bank of Canada last week saying, "No, I don't think interest rates can come down right now because inflation's still a problem." Less than 2% inflation, hundreds of thousands of people, millions of people, out of work in this province, and the governor of the Bank of Canada says interest rates can't come down. He's still going to support, and the federal government, whether it's Brian Mulroney, Kim Campbell or Jean Charest, is still going to support that type of policy, because they have this obsession that somehow 2% inflation is going to be the undoing of the country when millions of people and millions of women are out of work as a result of that policy. It's shameful, and the member for Waterloo North should have talked about that.

The Deputy Speaker: Further questions or comments?

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): First of all, I want to congratulate the Labour critic for the Tory party for pointing out a number of areas of concern about the bill. I think what members opposite fail to understand is that it's not our job to fall in line like a bunch of trained seals and support legislation just because the honourable whip tells you that's what you're going to do. It's our job to try to look at some of the problems of implementing this particular bill.

Nobody in this House, in my view, would ever support the principle of not having equity for work of equal value. I think that's a given, whether it's the member who spoke or any members opposite or any members of my caucus.

But I find it fascinating to hear a member of this party stand up and say that they support small business because they removed the tire tax and the commercial concentration tax. They don't tell you about the insurance premium tax that replaced both of those at a net increase of some \$500 million in taxes out of everybody's pocket. Small business, consumers, seniors, young drivers, everybody in the province felt the bite. At least the taxes that you eliminated were specific towards certain purposes. The point is, don't try to fool people by telling them that you've eliminated taxes when you in fact quadrupled the revenue with one stroke of the pen.

With regard to the comments on pay equity, I know that the member of the Conservative Party is trying to get a point through to all of you; that is, it isn't black and white. There's a terrible recession, a devastating recession, going on out there in small business. More regulatory problems and implementation problems are going to strangle them more than they're already being hurt.

1630

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I am pleased to rise and add my comments to the member for Waterloo North's presentation. I think she gave an outstanding speech on behalf of our caucus, as she always does.

I was interested in the member for Oxford's question and comment afterwards and his impassioned response. I know he's getting married later on this week, I gather, and he's putting forward that sort of approach in this House this afternoon. But when he got on the issue of the interest rates and continued to try to—I don't know how he reached that point, the federal interest rate policy, and we all know that interest rates are now at historic lows—he said there's a major difference between the interest rates in Canada and the United States, which is entirely true. But I wonder if the member understands that there aren't too many jurisdictions in the United States that are borrowing \$1 billion a month, as the province of Ontario is at the present time, and that the extensive borrowing requirement that this government is putting forward month after month on the foreign bond markets is meaning that interest rates have to be, unfortunately, higher than they would be otherwise.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr Arnott: I would once again commend the member for Waterloo North.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Wellington. Yes, please go ahead.

Mr Arnott: I'm finished. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further questions or comments? If not, the member for Wellington North, you have two minutes to reply.

Mrs Witmer: Waterloo North.

The Deputy Speaker: Waterloo North, sorry.

Mrs Witmer: Thank you very much. Certainly I appreciate the comments that were made by the member from Mississauga West. I'm glad he corrected the member from Oxford concerning the tire tax and the concentration tax and the fact that they really pale in comparison to the new insurance tax this government has levied on all employers and employees throughout this province, which, I can assure you, if the phone calls are any indication and if the letters are any indication, is going to again create tremendous economic hardship for many people in this province.

Your budget, with its \$2 billion in taxes, is going to create further job loss, and certainly it's women, as I've mentioned before, who are going to be extremely hard hit.

I thank the member for Wellington for his comments. I would just like to say that I do hope that in the very near future, the wage gap between males and females

will be totally eliminated and I am confident that this will happen. I am confident it will happen if we continue to ensure that women have equal access to the education and training opportunities that have so long been made much more readily available to the males in our society. It's certainly not going to be pay equity legislation, and I would add again that this pay equity legislation, although it's well intended, is going to be hurting the very individuals it was intended to help, and that's the women.

As I said before, my YWCA has indicated that because of pay equity, there will be service cuts, there will be job cuts and the women who are desperately in need of housing and shelter and counselling and support are the women who are going to be prevented from accessing those opportunities. So I would suggest to this government, let's all work together to create equal opportunities for men and women in this province.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further debate?

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): I'd actually hoped that the government itself would have had some comments to make in regard to this very, very important bill.

It's indeed an honour and a privilege to address this Bill 102, and of course the replacement of Bill 168.

Let me put in perspective what I understand pay equity to be. As I understand it, it is a bill to address the inequity in the pay structure that talks about equal pay for work of equal value. People who are generally discriminated against in that respect are individuals like women, visible minorities and the disabled, people who are not paid in the proportional way that they should because of those characteristics.

You can recall that in 1987, when the Liberal government introduced the Pay Equity Act, it was then the only jurisdiction in North America that asked that it be done in both the private and the public sector.

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): It excluded a lot of people.

Mr Curling: Of course, as my colleague across the floor from Wentworth North stated, even with that bill, it excluded some people. I just want to make a comment on that aspect of it and my view on this.

I think it was inadequate, of course, because when we start to address pay equity and we only see women as the individuals who are being discriminated against, not being paid equally for work of equal value, I think we're not being completely open about the discriminatory practices in pay. Many people, as I said, who are visible minorities and those who are disabled were not being addressed. I think, as legislators, we must not be halfway in what we do, because it creates more problems. However, the act that we enacted in 1987 did concentrate on mostly women, or all women, it seems, and was not in any way appropriate.

At that time too, the Liberal government established the Pay Equity Commission to oversee the implementation of the act, as well as an independent tribunal to resolve any disputes that came out of that.

The act is intended to redress systemic gender discrimination, of course, in compensation, comparing work traditionally performed by women to work traditionally performed by men. We know, for instance, in the hospitals, the work of nursing assistants had been compared to the work of plumbers and electricians. They in that category of nurses were continuously being discriminated against for years and, of course, men did not enter into those professions, or enough men, so to speak, to encourage the level of pay to rise. So a gender-neutral comparison of skill and effort, responsibility and working conditions was made so that we could address that condition.

You may recall that some time when this new government came into power, they introduced their new bill—I think at the time they called it Bill 102—and they felt they were going to address all the inequities that were left out by the previous government.

Then we felt, well, here is a progressive move on behalf of this government which had promised—as a matter of fact, I recall, before anything really got going properly, the Premier of the day took credit for enacting this pay equity legislation, and many times in the House my colleagues here brought to his attention that the bill had not yet been enacted into law. Lo and behold, alas, that bill didn't see the day.

Here they come again, introducing a new bill to replace this old bill that they didn't get on. And just typical that this government would be looking at an extension of time now because they're running out of time to put their bills in place, that here it is, they had scrapped the first bill, put the second bill in, and there are no differences. I felt at the time, if you want to save time, what they could have done was amend their first bill and proceed on with it. But oh, no, they put this new bill in, and we haven't seen any differences with regard to the current bill that is before the House to be looked at now.

The act currently, as we know, provides a job-to-job comparison which cannot address pay equity for female jobs for which there is no male or female comparable in the establishment. As we know, this method of comparison was preferred because it would clearly show the actual wage disparity, and thus it hopefully would increase public acceptance of the concept of pay equity. It was also easier for small employers to implement, and that's how we proceeded in our days as a Liberal government.

1640

The act brought pay equity, as we know, to about 1.4 million women out of the approximately 1.7 million women working for employers covered by the act. As

we know, the job-to-job comparison could not be utilized where there was no male job class which can be used as a comparator for a female job class.

We saw those difficulties and we acknowledged the fact that there were difficulties there and proceeded with the bill in order to put those 1.4 million people within the aspect of getting equal pay for work of equal value. We know what problem we had with that was that without the male comparators, the female job classes covered by the act really could not benefit from the legislation even if the jobs were undervalued.

Again, as I said, we knew that, we acknowledged that, as the Liberal government, and we still decided to proceed with pay equity, knowing that there were difficulties. There was a commitment made in 1986. What we were to do was to study and propose changes to the act to enable employees in female jobs without appropriate male comparators to achieve pay equity, and in October 1989 the Pay Equity Commission released a report recommending that new comparisons be introduced to increase the number of employees able to benefit from the act. Mr Speaker, you will recall that the proxy method, recommended for the broader public sector, would involve cross-employer comparison.

The other aspect of the debate today is that proportional value will be used mainly in the private sector and it would involve comparing jobs performed mainly by women indirectly with jobs performed mainly by men in the same establishment. Therefore, unlike the job-to-job method, proportional value does not require that a direct comparison be found between every female job and similarly valued male jobs. It relates compensation to the value of the work performed.

Then we have this government, which came into power, and in February 1990 the Minister of Labour recommended adoption—at that time it was the Liberal government—of the proportional value method of job comparison for any female job for which there is no male comparator's job in the same establishment.

We, the Liberal government, rejected the proxy method, because it was quite a problematic comparison to do it with other establishments. It involves very rather complex administrative difficulties, the sharing, of course, of confidential payroll information. You can see where this itself would create a tremendous amount of problems, of people sharing their payroll in order to get comparative relationships with other jobs in other companies, and the confidentiality could not be preserved or contained there.

In regard to the proxy, the proxy would also require a very active government involvement in the process, which would really add to its delay and complexity. The Liberal government of the day, then, wished to leave the actual implementation of pay equity to the workplace parties, which I feel is very much democratic.

Well, there were many complaints from several interest groups, and the Liberal government did not feel that the act was the appropriate vehicle for addressing the problem of what we would call those chronically low wages in certain all-female jobs. As we know, the very popular one that we always use is the child care sector. Instead what we did is that the Liberal government set aside that extra funding to improve the wages of those poorly paid social services workers and also made direct operating grants to child care centres for wage improvement. You may recall too under that plan, Mr Speaker, certain workers, such as the child care which I speak about and the community workers, received a wage increase up to 25%.

But we strongly believed that adoption of the proportional value, that is, one without the proxy, would permit the majority of women currently excluded to benefit from pay equity. With proportional value, about 90% of the excluded women would benefit from pay equity, and we admitted and accepted that.

Again, despite the concern which the Liberal government identified with the proxy method of pay equity, this government, the NDP government, decided to establish today, as you can see, both the proportional value method and the proxy method of job comparison, seeing all the problems that it would have created.

According to the minister's own statement, this act will widen the coverage of the pay equity legislation from, as he stated, 630,000 women to just over a million women. The proxy method of comparison will be used, as they said, mainly in the broader public sector and will cover between 70,000 and 80,000 women currently excluded.

This part of the bill, he said, would apply to the public sector employers if a female job class could not be compared to any male job class in the establishment using the job-to-job or the proportional value method of comparison.

They set aside an estimated \$1.12 billion for the broader public sector and the private sector for the implementation of the proxy and the proportional value. But again, we have insistently asked this government to show us any kind of study or what is the estimated cost of implementation of these two methods of pay equity. We've not seen any type of study or statement made as to the cost of this implementation.

It is consistent of this government all the time that today it's in one direction and, if it doesn't work, it's like trial and error; then they go to the other direction. You have to have plans, visions and a strategy in which to implement your plan, your programs. It costs.

As a matter of fact, when they introduced their budget two years ago, I recall they were saying, "We cannot fight the recession on the backs of the poor and we will spend our way out of this recession." There

were many appeals on this side of the House that stated to them: "You cannot do that. It is very easy: If you have no money, you can't spend. If you depend on your credit card, you either pay me now or pay me later."

When they decided to pay back all the debts and all the money they gave out, they realized there was nothing in the kitty, so they come blaming the federal government for their mismanagement, knowing the fact that there's a recession abound, bankruptcy was abound, but still they continued to spend their way out of a recession.

It wasn't as much as a year later, or less, that they reversed their decision again: "We cannot spend our way out of the recession. As a matter of fact, all the funds that we had spent and given out to other people, we're going to ask for them back." Typical of this government changing its direction one day and another.

The social contract is a splendid example. Here is a government that has gotten a mandate. As a matter of fact, they had three mandates in which to govern. They had a social mandate because people liked their ideology and said, "That's the government I would like." They had another mandate, an economic mandate they put forward in their campaign, how they would go about spending their funds and spending the taxpayers' money in a responsible manner. They have a strategy. They have an economic mandate.

What they did in the middle of it all, of the three—and I recall, when the Liberal government was in power and David Peterson, that leader had looked forward and said, "There's a recession coming and what I will do is I will go to the people because we have to have a new strategy." The people spoke and said: "I gave you five years to govern. You're coming back to us again to govern. I feel that we will use someone else who's prepared to govern. We will look at a New Democratic Party which has been shouting rhetoric for a long time, and we're going to see, whatever it talks, if it can walk the walk."

We gave them that mandate: to govern in that direction, to carry out the laws and the ideology and the vision, which they said they would do.

1650

In three years what they tried to do is they tried to renegotiate or circumvent the aspect of democracy and talk about a social contract and get a certain amount of people together to see if they could get \$2 billion of the money they have spent already. This side of the fence has told them, "You should not spend your way out of the recession." Now they want \$2 billion from certain sectors.

We few have said to them: "If you need a new mandate, what you should do, instead of getting people in a corner, one sector of society, to negotiate that kind of money, is to say to them, 'Listen, let's go back to the

people,' because we have to change our direction. We don't have a social contract any more. What we spoke about, we cannot deliver." Just like 102 and 168: When they talked about 102, they said, "We will do this." Then they had to change their minds again to 168—or 168 and change to 102.

What happened when they tried to renegotiate a new social contract, not to go to the polls? The people rejected them because they could not believe that people in the New Democratic Party would have gone back on their word and even tried to tamper with the collective bargaining agreements and things they fought for. They believed that if any of the three parties would have respected the collective bargaining agreement, it would be the New Democratic Party, but it didn't.

They decided that absolute power will corrupt them absolutely. They were so incensed with that power that they went to the people to negotiate and today they rejected them and turned them back. Now, it would be rather interesting to see, as they do with this pay equity bill and trying to get equity, that the people do not believe them.

This is an extremely serious matter. The member would say to me, "Why don't you smile?" It's not a smiling matter one bit. It's a very serious matter. I say to you as you look at your pay equity—and all governments, whoever takes charge of getting equity, equal pay for work of equal value—we don't only look for women in itself but we look for all those people who have been denied equal pay for work of equal value.

I had hoped that this bill itself would have addressed that and gone further, not only looking at women who have been discriminated—of course, have in greater numbers been discriminated in that sense—but looked at visible minorities who have taken jobs where they been consistently denied good pay or equal pay for the same work they were doing with other comparatives; or the disabled who are being discriminated every day, constantly about being paid equally.

This bill doesn't go far enough. This bill does not address equal pay for work of equal value for all those who have been denied that. Of course, the expression would be that when the Liberals had it, did they address that? No, they did not. I'm not here as an apology for the Liberal Party; I am here to defend the real concerns of pay equity, of equal pay for work of equal value regardless of gender, class, creed or colour. That's how we address pay equity in this province.

The fact is that these people, the New Democratic Party, which spoke so eloquently in the time in opposition, which talks about addressing inequity, has failed miserably in every equity aspect of its legislation. In every administration too, they have failed. They have failed in employment equity. They have dragged their feet and have not brought in any type of progressive move, seeing that they're moving forward in employ-

ment equity.

Pay equity is following the same way. You introduce one bill; you pull it back. Then when you pull it back and bring another bill in, it itself does not say anything new but a matter for stalling tactics, so they would say, "We're working on it."

We, the Liberal Party here, are prepared to support a pay equity bill that addresses all those concerns. This one doesn't. It doesn't itself. I'm telling you that sometimes when I do listen to my colleagues on the government side there, I almost want to believe them. But I'm so glad they had an opportunity to rule and to govern, to realize that to say one thing and to do something else is something different, that they must govern for all, not interest groups themselves, which you came in to do.

You know, the chicken has come home to roost. The chicken really has come home to roost when they said that the interest groups they were catering for all the time, solidarity for ever—"We will send all of our money to the NDP because they articulate the things that we are fighting for in pay equity and employment equity and all those things." Alas, they have not come through. They have failed on pay equity. They are miserably failing on employment equity because they are dragging their feet.

The poor ministers, who had good intentions, have had some poor leadership, not having a chance around the cabinet table in order to advance their cases. Let's say they are advancing their cases strongly. I am saying there is no vision. There are no inclusions at all of all the people who can be addressing pay equity that are being looked at seriously. They are more concerned about addressing single-interest groups. I would want all my colleagues there—I have spoken to them all individually, wonderful people and I think good of heart, but so misguided.

Who hurts from all this? The people who had expected some sort of redress for their inequities in legislation. What this has done is it has done nothing in itself to do that. The fact is that the Liberal legislation had moved a little towards addressing that; limited, as I said, in addressing women, of course, but the other sectors of the society were left out, those who were denied equal pay for work of equal value.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission already addressed one of these conditions. In the human rights commission legislation, it showed that you may not be discriminated because of gender, class or religion etc. It is there. Sometimes I feel that we create legislation and we create commissions to give people jobs. Jobs to whom? Jobs for those commissions that will be established but do not address the inequities in the society itself.

I would be one who would be advocating strongly:

They could scrap the Pay Equity Commission, scrap the employment equity commission, put one equity commission in place and let it look after the inequities of this society. We have all kinds of equity commissions being established, billions of dollars being spent in administration, no redress for those people who are being denied, or few people are being addressed on this.

We can be caught up, of course, with the technicalities of legislation: who will get it and how it will be implemented. But I choose not to address that aspect of it. I wish I could wake up my colleagues to the fact that we're talking about people who have been left out. How long can the visible minorities wait to be paid fairly? How long can the disabled wait to be paid fairly? Until one sector of those groups that have been discriminated have been addressed?

It is not sufficient, because families and daughters and mothers are starving out there, literally starving, not able to meet their bills, and being denied, not because of their education, not because of their ability, but because they are women and because they are visible minorities and because they are disabled. If we as legislators can't recognize that, we have failed miserably in our task to address that.

The fact is that we hear it each day. It's not the fact that they sit back and say, "I think you're proceeding in the right direction." They are knocking at your door every time you go to your constituency office. I'm sure people are saying, "I have been denied a job because I'm disabled and I'm not being paid properly because I'm disabled, or a visible minority or because I'm a woman." To use one bill just to address one sector of it is inadequate.

My concern, as I said, is to raise that awareness within my colleagues in this House so that they look at this bill and say, "It's inadequate." Be bold, I ask the ministers, all the ministers who are there. I remember the minister when a question was asked about a women's issue. They denied to answer the question. We asked, "Who is the women's issues minister?" They said, "All here advocate for women and we are all women's issues ministers." My golly, if I asked the same question, "Who advocates for the visible minority or the disabled?" they would then say to me, "All." But it's funny that although they all do that, what happens? We hear nothing. The legislation does not reflect that. So the bill itself is inadequate. The bill itself must speak and address all those who have been left out, because otherwise we have failed.

1700

At any opportunity I get in this House—which is not very much—to speak, I will be making that point over and over. Of course they will say it will be rather boring, but it is so important that I feel it must be said over and over and over again because we have not progressed in the way we could. I feel we will measure

progress when all people in this community, in this province, in this country, feel a sharing part of that progress and that building of this country, if they get to participate equally; not denied, because they are women, from being paid properly, not denied from participating because they're a visible minority and not denied because they are disabled. We have not moved very well.

In summary, it is important that I appeal again not only to the government side but to all my colleagues who may speak after me to understand the emotion and the reality and the actuality of what is happening out there, that people are not able to feed their families on basic principles alone. So I would like to say that I will not be supporting this. We have the opportunity to go beyond this, and until we can address that and have a good bill that talks about pay equity, not about women only, not about visible minorities only, not only about the disabled and all those who are being discriminated against, but to be paid equal pay for work of equal value, then we would have what we would call a good pay equity bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): I thank the honourable member. Questions and/or comments?

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): I just want to comment on one of the statements made by the honourable member towards the end of his debating period, and that is in regard to the fact of minority women being recognized under this legislation.

I just would like to put it on the record for the benefit of those people who are listening and also for the member that this bill is equal pay for work done by women. It is specifically addressed to women's work. That is not to say that there isn't visible minority women's work that could be identified, but this is to address a long-time difference in how women are being paid for doing the job that others do for more money, and I think the member from Scarborough North knows that. I think too that it's important that it could be a minority person doing the job, it could be a disabled person doing the job, and it is very gender-specific. It is to make women have the same pay that men make.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments?

Mr Mahoney: I think Mr Curling, my colleague from Scarborough North, points out a number of concerns and flaws in this legislation that the government members are prepared to just overlook. That's somewhat frustrating.

If this bill were really going to help women and minorities and disabled, then perhaps there would be a stronger sense of support from this side. In fact, we've struggled, in the two years that this government has been in office, to try to find a bill we could support,

because it just seems to miss the mark all the time.

The problem with this bill that the opposition members don't understand is that this is one more piece of regulatory problem being piled on top of everything else that the business community has to face. The reality is that what you could wind up with here is that instead of getting pay equity, we're going to wind up with people being out of work.

The first people to go will indeed be the people at the bottom end of the scale, and that's the difficulty we're facing. I mean, the economy is in such terrible shape that what we should be doing is finding ways—we don't discard the principle of pay equity, by any means. We don't discard the principle of fairness, to pay someone an equal amount of money for work they're doing in comparison to someone else doing a similar job.

The problem is that you put in place a regulatory system; we have pay equity police. I'm going to go on at some later time today and tell you the example of the region of Peel, which in 1986 brought in a pay equity program that made a lot of sense, and it put in place the proper time to implement this thing and phase it in.

The problem that has been pointed out with this bill is that it will not help the people it's designed to help and will create greater problems for business.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Further questions or comments? Seeing none, the honourable member for Scarborough North has two minutes in response.

Mr Curling: The member from Sudbury—

Mr Mahoney: North? Centre? East? West? Centre.

Mr Curling: —from Sudbury made the exact point I made: She said this is gender-specific. That's what I spoke on. I talked at length about the women who were described in there and some of the inequities that women face in job comparison, and that the bill is gender-specific. She'd have liked me to more or less have blinkers on to deal with that as pay equity, and I said no. The fact is that we must deal with pay equity in the sense of all those who have been discriminated against, regardless of gender, regardless of class, regardless of ability, because this bill itself will address gender-specific: They are called women. So when you say gender-specific, let's be specific. Gender: women. I'm saying we must have pay equity legislation that makes sure we deal with all people who are clustered into an area where they're not getting equal pay for work of equal value, and women are not the only people who have received that.

I did not single out visible minority women. I was saying to you, beyond all of this, that we have visible minority and we have disabled. I'm not talking about women. I'm saying there are other people: male. Visible minority males are underpaid, and disabled males are also underpaid, and maybe all the women too. My

debate here is to raise that awareness, and I hope I have done so.

The Acting Speaker: I wish to thank the honourable member for his participation and his response. Further debate?

Mr Arnott: I'm privileged to rise this afternoon on behalf of the people of Wellington to put forward my views on Bill 102 at third reading. An Act to amend the Pay Equity Act.

This bill was introduced for first reading in this Legislature on November 26, 1992. It received second reading debate on December 10, 1992, and went out to committee over the winter break. I was pleased to be able to represent our Progressive Conservative Party on the committee during those hearings.

The substance of Bill 102 is as follows. It replaces Bill 168, which received first reading on December 18, 1991. The new bill introduces all the same amendments as the previous bill, with a few additions and changes.

The most important feature of this bill, I believe, is that due to the fiscal situation of the province, the deadline for achieving pay equity in the public sector has been moved from 1995 to 1998, and pay equity plans may be reopened to extend payouts over that new time frame. In addition, the effective date for proportional value adjustments has been delayed one year, until January 1, 1993, and the proxy approach has been delayed one year, until January 1, 1994.

1710

Like Bill 168, the amendments will expand pay equity to cover an additional 420,000 Ontario women by adding two new methods of comparison: proportional value for employees in the public and private sectors and proxy comparison for employees in the public sector only. The new bill explains the proxy comparison method in greater detail than in Bill 168.

A good deal of jargon, but proxy value comparison is a way of indirectly comparing female and male job classes in the same organization. It looks at the relationship between the value of work performed and the compensation received by male job classes and applies the same principles and practices to compensating female job classes.

Proxy comparison, on the other hand, from which the government has estimated approximately 80,000 women will benefit, is a new approach. Where comparisons cannot be made in the public sector using job-to-job or proportional value comparison methods, proxy comparison can be used. The proxy comparison method allows an organization to find male comparators for its female jobs in outside organizations. Only organizations that are in the broader public sector will be able to use the proxy approach. This will include female-dominated sectors such as home care, nursing homes, corrections, child care and others.

I think the two most important issues that we want to talk about with respect to the pay equity debate are the cost of pay equity and the fairness of pay equity.

During the course of the hearings that the committee on general government, I believe, conducted on Bill 102, I had the opportunity to move an amendment in the committee to request that the Ministry of Labour, or actually the Treasurer and Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, provide the committee with information as to what pay equity has cost since it was first introduced by the Liberal government.

My motion was as follows: "Would the Treasurer and Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet provide the committee members with the following information:

"(1) The annual pay equity adjustment costs for the Ontario public service for the years 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993;

"(2) The projected annual pay equity adjustment costs for the Ontario public service for the years 1994 to 1998;

"(3) The company name and total amount paid for any consulting services that the government acquired to assist with the development of pay equity plans for the Ontario public service;

"(4) The annual pay equity adjustment costs for the broader public sector, with a breakdown for school boards, hospitals, municipalities and colleges and universities for the years 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993;

"(5) The exact dollar amounts transferred from the government to public schools, hospitals, municipalities and colleges and universities to assist the broader public sector with pay equity adjustments;

"(6) The projected annual pay equity adjustment costs for the broader public sector, with a breakdown for school boards, hospitals, municipalities and colleges and universities for the years 1994 to 1998;

"(7) The estimated pay equity adjustment costs for private sector employers with 500 or more employees for 1991, 1992 and 1993;

"(8) The estimated pay equity adjustment costs for private sector employers with 100 to 499 employees for 1992 and 1993."

The effect of this motion was to provide a complete accounting of the cost of pay equity since the NDP came to power. That was, I felt, important information that the committee required. I felt it was very, very important that we had a full understanding of what the cost of pay equity was going to be, especially given the difficult fiscal situation that we knew the province faced, even in January and February of this year.

My motion was defeated and we didn't get an opportunity to receive that information.

The second issue that I think is very, very important with respect to pay equity is the issue of fairness. We

all support equal pay for work of equal value. I think that's been brought out in this debate. I venture to guess that there is no member of this Legislature who does not support the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. Where we differ is how to achieve that end.

I remember in the course of my research for this bill, from my involvement on the committee, I read a journal article from a political science journal—I forget the name of it—but Premier Davis in 1981, as leader of the government, indicated at that time that the position of the Progressive Conservative Party—during the course of an election campaign—was that we supported the principle of pay equity; we supported the principle for equal pay for work of equal value. However, we were concerned about the complexity and the administration and the cost of administration of going forward and having the government step in and intervene and try to bring in these pay equity increases and adjustments.

I still think that experience has demonstrated that he was in fact correct. It has been enormously expensive and enormously complex and it has created a new bureaucracy which has made it very, very expensive, and it will continue to be so over the next few years.

This bill, as part of the government's agenda, has a lot to do with wealth redistribution. I believe that the government's motivation behind this bill is to redistribute wealth to people who it feels have been discriminated against with respect to their pay. I think that's their motivation. But again, we see the government's focus on wealth redistribution instead of where it should be. The focus of the government should be on wealth creation, especially at this time in our economic cycle, when the government is having difficulty with its revenues, has—yes, Mr Speaker?

The Acting Speaker: I want to thank the honourable member and he will certainly have the floor just as soon as we introduce some very distinguished guests in our midst today. In the west members' gallery we have the chairman of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits, Mr Wan Dao Han. We also have with us the vice-chairman of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits, Mr Tang Shu Bei. And we also have the consulate general for the People's Republic of China, Mr Tang Fu Sin. Gentlemen, welcome to the Legislature of Ontario and do have a good stay in our province. Thanks for being here.

The honourable member for Wellington.

Mr Arnott: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Unfortunately, you neglected to mention that my wife is also in the members' gallery. I know you overlooked that, but it's very important that all the distinguished guests in the chamber be recognized.

Mr Mahoney: That's called major sucking up.

Mr Arnott: Well, we're dealing with pay equity.

When we talk about the importance of the focus of

what this government should be looking at, we continue to see the need for a focus towards wealth creation. We all know that the economy continues to be in the persistent doldrums that we've been experiencing for the last three years and it's important that the government's every initiative is looked at in terms of its potential for wealth creation. When we get our economy back on sound ground and sound footing, then, I would submit, is the time to start looking once again at the issue of wealth redistribution. So I would put that point forward to the government and hopefully it will consider that.

During the course of our committee hearings I also moved an amendment to the bill, and the effect of it would have been to allow the private sector some degree of extension for implementing pay equity similar to what the government has given itself. I find it interesting that during the course of this third reading debate we see that the government is patting itself on the back for coming forward with pay equity, when in fact it tends to overlook or it's forgotten or some of the government members don't understand that this bill in fact gives the government a greater time frame, in effect delaying the implementation of pay equity. Some of the government members obviously don't understand that, because in their zeal to pat themselves on the back they're overlooking that important fact.

But the effect of the amendment that I put forward, again, would have been to allow the private sector some measure of extension on the implementation of pay equity. If indeed the government and the public sector need more time to implement pay equity because of a difficult economy, that same argument is valid for the private sector.

1720

I think the government should have given consideration to allowing that amendment to pass, because Bill 102 allows three more years for the government to achieve pay equity. All existing requirements to implement pay equity plans in the public sector by 1995 are extended to 1998, but the bill does not affect the time lines for private sector implementations of pay equity.

Private sector companies are required to begin making pay equity adjustments according to the following schedule: For a company of 500 employees and more, the first pay equity adjustment had to be January 1, 1991; for a smaller company, 100 to, say, 499 employees, the first pay equity adjustment had to be at the first of the year in 1992; for companies between 50 employees and 99, the first pay equity adjustment had to be last January, January 1, 1993, and for even the smallest of companies, 10 to 49 employees—this is a lot of companies, certainly in Wellington county—their first pay equity adjustment by statute has to be made on January 1, 1994, so January 1 next year.

Again, we see an issue of fairness, where the government has given more opportunity, more time for itself

to implement pay equity and not given the same consideration to private businesses, the job creators in this province, that are experiencing difficulty just as the government is with respect to our difficult economy. Business and industry in this province have been devastated by the recession, but no changes have been made to their pay equity obligations. I would ask the question: Why is there one standard for the government and another standard for the private sector?

I could go through probably 16 minutes and 48 seconds more of statistics and information as to the difficulty that small companies have had with respect to the recession. I think there's ample evidence—the government is aware of this—that would indicate that the private sector needs to be given more time, if indeed the government needs to be given more time, with respect to pay equity.

There's another important issue that I think we should talk about with respect to this debate. This bill was introduced, as we know, some time ago—actually last December, I guess it was—before we knew the full implications of the government's fiscal position. The government has just spent the last two months going through its social contract negotiations. The whole purpose of that negotiation process, two full months of government resources at the senior levels, including—I have no idea, but I'm sure the Premier spent many, many hours on that particular portfolio during the past two months—the time of the Premier, the most important time that any of us has, spent on what proved to be ultimately a fruitless process that has gotten us nowhere.

In that whole process, the focus was the fact that the government today cannot afford the total compensation that it is paying to the public service and the broader public sector. The government has said that \$42 billion, which is presently the aggregate amount it is paying in terms of salaries and wages to its employees, is not affordable and is unsustainable. So the government's saying it's got to shave \$2 billion off that amount. Our party agrees with that. Fundamentally, we support the government's initiative towards that end if indeed it results in a permanent downsizing of the cost of government in Ontario.

But when we talk about doing third reading of Bill 102 at this time, when we talk about a bill that in many ways will actually increase the total cost of government, the total cost of the salaries and wages of the provincial government, it seems to me that we're being fundamentally inconsistent, and I would argue even further, fundamentally insane.

It doesn't make any sense, if we're talking about on one hand the need to decrease the broader public sector salaries and the Ontario public service salaries by approximately 5%, that we're going ahead with this bill, the effect of which will actually increase, in many, many job areas and in many job classifications, their

salaries.

What are we going to do if over the course of the next couple of months the government decides it's going to have to legislate a 5% pay reduction to all civil servants? We're going to legislate a 5% reduction in everybody's pay and then come forward with this bill and give them an increase again? It doesn't make sense. It lacks common sense.

I do not understand why they would go ahead. It seems like they're causing themselves a great deal of grief and problems. If in fact they would look at the total situation, if they would look at the ability of the government to pay these amounts of money and make a decision based on the ability to pay, then we wouldn't be engaging in this discussion at this time.

There's one other thing I'd like to add to this debate. A number of members have mentioned it but I would like to also because I feel that it's a very important element to this debate. This is an editorial which appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on January 21, 1993, and it talks about the wage gap which is brought out from time to time in various studies, the wage gap which appears to suggest that women are being systemically discriminated against, because on average they're making less than men.

There was a recent study by Statistics Canada which indicated that the women's wages have risen from 67% of men's in the year 1990 to 69% relative to men's wages, so they've gone up. But the study also indicates that there is more to the difference between men's and women's salaries and wages than just what the government would put forward as a simple reason for the difference: systemic discrimination.

There are other differences that have to be looked at. One is education, the amount of education that individual has. This study demonstrates that women with a university degree earned more than men with lower levels of education. That seems to suggest that there isn't the degree of discrimination that some are arguing.

Hours worked are another important factor, which explains the difference between the wages earned by men and women. We also find that marriage has an impact, whether or not a woman is married. In fact—

Interjection.

Mr Arnott: No. Single women make about 90% of what single men make, which is a significant difference from the overall picture. So I must say that those are three very important criteria that have to be brought into this discussion.

We also see, I think, that there has been significant—

Ms Murdock: It's okay for a married woman to make less? Excuse me, just because she's married and makes less it's okay?

Mr Arnott: I hope the member for Sudbury has an opportunity to speak in response.

Ms Murdock: I think it's reprehensible that you would use that argument.

Mr Arnott: No, it's in the *Globe and Mail*. I know the member for Sudbury has seen this article and I know that during the course of the committee hearings she fundamentally rejected the entire argument, although she didn't address the specifics of it.

It's factual that these factors have to be brought into consideration to explain the difference. It's not just systemic discrimination. This government wants to point the finger at different areas of our society and state that there are some sort of awful forces out there that are doing ill to people. I don't think that the government fundamentally understands this.

I intend to vote against this bill because I think the key issues of cost have not been addressed. We still do not know fundamentally what this bill will cost, what pay equity is going to cost, and I will not vote in favour of something if I have no idea what it's going to cost. Second is the issue of fairness, that this bill does not extend to private business the same extension that the government is giving itself through Bill 102.

Those are the two reasons that I am going to be voting against this bill, and I would conclude with that remark.

1730

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments on the member for Wellington's participation?

Ms Murdock: Again I thank you and I thank the participation of the member, but I just want to make sure that there's a clarification on the record. I believe I clarified it in the committee but I'll do so here in the House.

There has never been a deadline on the private sector, so the deadline that has been moved for the public sector is not—we regret the necessity of having a public sector deadline and having moved it, but I think what's really important here is that we're going to be including significantly more women in the pay equity process who are presently excluded. I mean, 400,000 more women will be affected, and that's important.

In terms of a proxy, for instance, the proxy method of comparison only applies to the public sector; it doesn't apply to the private sector at all, so that's important. As well, despite the fact of the extension to 1998, each of those employers still has to keep the 1% back and allocate it for pay equity purposes, so it isn't like they can abrogate their requirements and the responsibilities of doing that.

I just want to make one more comment on some of the statistics read from the *Globe and Mail*, and of course, as we all know, the media never lie, never misrepresent any kind of information—

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): Well, where are your facts? You don't even know how much this is

going to cost.

Ms Murdock: I'm just commenting on the issue of single women make 90% of what single men do, even though that statistic is not the same for married women. I would say that I think it's totally improper and unacceptable that just because a woman chooses to marry, it should be quite acceptable for her to make less than what a man would make doing that same work, that it doesn't matter whether you're married or not, you make the same money.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments?

Mr Tilson: I would like to congratulate the member from Wellington on a well-prepared and thought-out presentation to this House. I think it's been quite clear from all sides of this House that no one is opposed to the principles of pay equity, no one is, but it's an ironic fact that this particular bill is coming to this House at a time when the Premier of this province has stood up in this place, even today, to say that he's going to cut back \$2 billion from the public service, a very ironic twist when we look back to 1991 when Ontario's wage bill grew by 14.5%. That was in the first year of office for the NDP government. Spending on public servants' pay rose certainly much faster in that particular time than it did in the 1980s.

We still, as the member from Wellington pointed out, have no idea, we haven't the foggiest idea, as to what the financial implications of this bill are going to cost the people of the province of Ontario. We do know that there will be a further \$120 million that's going to cost pay equity for government employees, although that's being delayed, but we have no idea, and it is strange that at this particular point in time this bill is being brought forward for debate, on the very day that the civil service in some form or another is going to be cut back by \$2 billion.

So I will say that is one of the two issues that were raised by the member from Wellington and I congratulate him on a very well-thought-out speech.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Wellington has two minutes in response.

Mr Arnott: I want to thank the member for Dufferin-Peel for his comments, and also the member for Sudbury for her comments, but I want to address a couple of the points that she made.

She indicated that there has never been a deadline for the implementation of pay equity in the private sector. In my view, it's not entirely correct to say that, because there still is an initial payment deadline for businesses in the private sector.

Ms Murdock: Unless the plan is in place. One's there, but there's no guideline to their plan.

Mr Arnott: That's right, but there's been no exten-

sion given to them in recognition of the difficult economy. There's been absolutely no extension given to them, and there still is a requirement upon small business to do the pay equity plans and to make the first pay equity adjustment. So I still think that my initial points in that respect will in fact hold up in spite of the member's comments.

She also indicated in her two-minute rebuttal that it doesn't matter if a woman works or not, it shouldn't have any impact on her pay, and I certainly agree with that.

Ms Murdock: Oh, no. Married, not works.

Mr Arnott: It doesn't matter if a woman is married or not, she should receive pay that really is irrespective of the fact that she is married.

I just want to read one brief portion out of this Globe and Mail editorial that I referred to earlier, starting here:

"But the biggest factor is marriage. The earnings of single women, single men and married women working full-time are roughly comparable. But the earnings of the average married man rise above those of everyone else. That is the only real 'wage gap.' Whether or not it is a problem is a subject worthy of discussion. Its existence suggests that, as one would expect, married men and women choose certain career and life paths different from those chosen by singles. But why is it that many married women work only part-time or adopt less time-consuming (and less well-paying) full-time careers? Are they forced to by their husbands? By circumstance? By entrenched social attitudes? Do many, for a whole variety of unquantifiable reasons, freely choose this path, thinking it best for their families?"

The Acting Speaker: I want to thank the honourable member for his participation and his response. Further debate?

Mr Mahoney: It's obvious the government members, I guess, have been muzzled. They don't want to get up and talk about this.

Ms Murdock: We made an agreement.

Mr Mahoney: Well, we're going around the rotation. The tradition around here is that we speak, the Conservatives speak, and then we hear someone from the government try to defend their position. It's obvious to me that the strong work of the whip, as they get excited—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Thank you. The member for Mississauga West.

Mr Mahoney: As I was saying, I guess they've been told to keep quiet.

Hon Karen Haslam (Minister without Portfolio in Health): Mahoney, you know darn well if we make a deal, we keep the deal. Come on.

Mr Mahoney: I say to the junior minister for

whatever, who's chirping in the background, maybe if you'd answer a couple of questions in the Legislature, you wouldn't feel so frustrated that you have to yell and scream.

Hon Mrs Haslam: I can keep it up as long as he can.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Perth, please. Thank you. The member for Mississauga West.

Mr Mahoney: I'll try again. I don't know why it is that they get so excited when I simply try to point out some obvious problems.

I think a lot of what we've been hearing today about pay equity and about the problems with Bill 102 have to do with the difficulties of implementation. I want to bring an example to this place that proves the difficulties and the inconsistencies, particularly the inconsistencies of this government, although they say you should never shoot someone who's committing suicide. So rather than just slamming the government, I'll try to deal with the specific problems that have been raised for my attention and that of other members of this place that surround the children's aid societies in the province of Ontario.

As I'm sure you know, Mr Speaker, there are 51 of them in existence in the province of Ontario. They made a presentation in my constituency office last week, where they highlighted a very serious problem surrounding Bill 102, surrounding a decision by a pay equity tribunal on three specific areas in the province and surrounding implementation of this particular bill.

I'm going to have to read you some of this information, which comes directly from the Peel Children's Aid Society, in the presentation, because it's information that's vitally important in relationship to the implementation of this bill:

"On September 14, 1992, a pay equity tribunal ruled that the Ontario government was the employer for the Kingston-Frontenac Children's Aid Society for the purposes of the pay equity legislation."

That means the tribunal said that the people who work for the Kingston-Frontenac CAS are employed by the provincial government instead of being employed by the Kingston-Frontenac CAS.

As a result, Management Board of Cabinet did three things: First, they introduced corrective legislation in the form of Bill 102, which we're debating today; two, they appealed the tribunal decision; and three, amazingly enough, even though they appealed the decision, they "provided a one-time annualized base adjustment to the Halton, Kingston and Norfolk children's aid societies to enable these societies to pay their staff at the same level of public servants performing similar or comparable work."

While they appealed the decision, saying, "We don't

believe that these people who work for those three children's aid societies are employees of the province; we believe they indeed are employees of the children's aid societies who pay them; we think that's who they work for," they also said, "But even though we don't agree with that decision, we're going to give those three—three out of 51—children's aid societies the money to allow them to implement and negotiate a pay equity settlement with these people."

1740

This special pay equity decision, which the people at Peel children's aid call a pay parity decision, for only three children's aid societies, will enable these societies to raise the salaries of their staff, if you can imagine this, by an average of 17% this year. However, the government is unwilling to provide funds for the rest of the children's aid societies in the province, all of whom provide exactly the same services under the same funding arrangements. Thus, due to this special pay equity funding decision by this government, our workers, Peel Children's Aid Society, and all other CAS staff in the province are being paid substantially less than our Halton CAS colleagues to the west. Now, how can this be pay equity?

Interjection.

Mr Mahoney: The parliamentary assistant shouts across that nobody should fight the issue of equity in pay. Try listening to this example.

How can it be fair that three children's aid societies should be given money to increase their staff's pay by 17% this year based on the tribunal ruling that your government is appealing, yet give them the money and tell them to increase their pay to bring them up to the same level as social workers who work for the government—what about the other children's aid societies? What do you say to the people in Peel? Could it be because they're non-union in Peel? Most of the children's aid society staff is organized. Could it be that there is some concern that the government wants one of the largest children's aid societies in the province to follow the path of unionization? Maybe this is a way of doing it, saying, "If you were part of the union movement, we would then grant you the extra money to raise salaries."

Well, I don't know what the reason is. Maybe I'm being a little cynical in suggesting that could be the reason. I would like the government—and so, by the way, would the people at Peel Children's Aid Society—to explain. What do you say to the people who work for you when here's the difference: In the Ontario public service, the pay scale for a social worker is \$43,943 up to \$52,545. Currently, the pay scale for that same social worker working for children's aid is \$35,707 up to \$47,213. Now the children's aid society workers in the region of Halton, right next door, a nine-iron away, for goodness' sake, are going to be getting

paid at the rate of the Ontario public service, whereas the people who happen to work for Peel children's aid, because this government decided to make an exception of Halton and two other communities in the province—

Ms Murdock: But you're talking about wage parity. You're not—

Mr Mahoney: What do you mean, "You're talking about wage parity"? It's the same job, the same person, the same work, the same sex, the same qualifications, and because you guys have decided to give this extra money in those three children's aid societies, they're going to make \$10,000 to \$12,000 a year more just because they work for Halton.

Ms Murdock: I'm not saying that information is wrong—

Mr Mahoney: It isn't wrong. I'm sorry. The information is right here. Let me go on to help the government members understand this.

"By way of background, children's aid societies are non-profit corporations, each with their own board of directors who have legal governance responsibilities for the overall management of the society. All receive funding from both the provincial and regional governments on an 80-20 split. Thus the boards are the sole employers for the staff within the society regardless of the sources of funding. Each society has its own particular labour relationship with its employees. Of the 51 non-native CASs in Ontario, 41 are unionized, mostly with OPSEU and CUPE, and 10 are not, with Peel children's aid being the largest society that is not unionized."

It's interesting, when I refer to the union pressures, that since Bill 40 was passed—and people ask, "What's the impact of Bill 40?"—all of a sudden, out of the blue, there's a move to organize the entire social services department at the region of Peel. Nobody knew there was a problem, even the employees. All of a sudden the playing field has been tilted, and all of a sudden there are people coming in trying to infiltrate and organize.

I just wonder if it's a coincidence that the largest children's aid society in the province, being non-unionized, is now told that its neighbours to the west are going to be given—it's over half a million dollars, by the way, at a time when this government in its chaos with its social contract is going to be legislating layoffs, 40,000 people put out of work by this government through legislation because of the incompetence of the Premier and his negotiating team to get a deal. At a time when they're doing that, they're writing a cheque to the Halton Children's Aid Society, Mr North. How about your community? Talk to your children's aid society, find out what their workers are making and tell them why someone in Halton doing the same job, with the same ticket, with the same credentials, has a right to

earn \$10,000 to \$12,000 more.

The thing that makes this even more incredible, though, is the fact that your government has appealed the decision of the tribunal. They've appealed the decision of the tribunal that recognizes the employees of those three children's aid societies as employees of the government, Ontario public servants. They've said: "We don't agree with the decision of the appeal tribunal. However, we're going to give you the money anyway."

It's incredible. I see all the puzzled looks. Maybe you folks didn't know this. I don't know how you wouldn't know it, being that surely to goodness the Ministry of Labour is aware. I can tell you, I've got letters here from Dave Cooke at Management Board and from Marion Boyd explaining. Let me just share some of this with you. Maybe this will help.

Here's a letter to the Honourable Marion Boyd last December. This is not new news; this has been around for a while. December 21, 1992, from Peel Children's Aid society, and the letter says:

"I'm writing to you on behalf of the board of directors of the children's aid society of Peel. Through the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, we have received a copy of your letter to the children's aid societies of Kingston-Frontenac, Norfolk and Halton indicating"—and this is a quote from the letter—"the government has decided to provide allocations to Kingston-Frontenac, Halton and Norfolk which will be sufficient to permit the boards and their local bargaining agents to negotiate new salary grids that reflect the pay levels of public servants performing similar or comparable work. When the new pay adjustments take effect," the minister goes on to say, "these allocations will be added to the base funding for the three affected agencies."

Ms Murdock: That is not pay equity.

Mr Mahoney: Well, excuse me. It's not pay equity. The blatant unfairness—Mr Speaker, I ask you, follow me, help me on this: I'm a children's aid society worker in the region of Peel and I make \$35,000 with my social worker's position. I know you, sir—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: There's a period for questions and comments, and if you want to wait for that, you'll have ample time to discuss it. The member for Mississauga West.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, I again ask you: I'm that Peel children's aid society worker and I make \$35,000 a year and I have an accredited ticket that allows me to do that. Then you, sir, are working in Halton. You have the same job, you have the same qualifications, and you make \$47,000 a year. If that's not inequity, I don't know what is; two women.

Ms Murdock: It's wage parity.

Mr Mahoney: The parliamentary assistant keeps

shouting that it's wage parity. The point is that you will have one worker, and you will realize most of them are women, making \$12,000 a year more than the same worker 10 miles away, and you call that fair. You've made a decision—

Ms Murdock: No, we don't call that fair.

Mr Mahoney: Well, if you say it's not fair, then you'd better do one of a couple of things: You'd better either continue to appeal the decision of the tribunal and get the money back from those three CASs in a heck of a hurry, because I'm told that the people in those communities are ordering new cars, they're so thrilled—and who wouldn't be? A 17% pay increase: Maybe this is your idea of how to help the economy. Give the money out to some people and let them buy something. Maybe you've finally discovered a secret to help improve economic development in this province. Maybe that's what it is. That's wonderful.

1750

Now there are 48 other CASs, all with employees doing the same work who would like to buy a new car too. All the people who work there say: "Hey, we don't have a problem with a 17% pay increase. We kind of think that's neat." If you can get it, those—you shake your head, but I don't know how you can sleep with it. This is absolutely absurd; not to me, to the 48 children's aid societies which are looking at this, to the people in the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. It's not to me that it's unfair; it's to them. They say: "How do we negotiate with our staff? How do we go to our staff?"

Get this, here's the second shoe that's going to fall. This Premier is going to come in with legislation that's going to do either one of two things. It's either just going to lay off 40,000 people across the province or it's going to be enabling legislation for all the municipal corporations, for the hospitals, for all the what you people call "partners," which is a bit of a joke, but all of the people who deliver services at the community level, including children's aid societies, I might add. You're going to pass down some kind of enabling legislation that will allow them to cast aside their legal agreements with their labour people and tell them to renegotiate.

Not only have you given a pay increase of 17% to three select special children's aid societies; now you're going to come back to the rest of them and say: "We want you to cut your payroll. We want you to freeze wages. We want you to deduct 5% more. We want your people to take unpaid vacations. We want all of these things to happen." It just truly is an incredibly stupid decision made by your government that is putting in jeopardy all of the existing labour relations that are working quite well with the children's aid societies.

I have some questions for you that I feel somewhat obligated to put here on behalf of Ray Martins, presi-

dent of the Peel children's aid society, who asked last December, and has yet to receive a satisfactory answer, a number of questions to the minister.

(1) What are the underlying principles that have provided the context for this decision, the decision that he refers to as blatantly unfair to the staff of—he says 51; he means 48—other children's aid societies in the province of Ontario?

(2) How does the government justify providing this additional base allocation to three children's aid societies and not to any other? You see, I'm only talking about one sector here that shows the problems of implementation that my colleague from Scarborough North and the labour critic for the Conservative Party and others have been speaking about. I'm talking about one sector, children's aid societies, the problems of implementation.

He goes on and asks, "Is there something intrinsically different about the work of the staff within those societies?" Because in pay equity I don't care if you know all the details of how you're going to compare one job to another job and what system you're going to use. I mean, the bottom line is that if you're doing the same job, then you should get paid the same money. That's not happening as a result of a government decision in three children's aid societies. He asks a simple question, "Is there something intrinsically different about the work of the staff within those societies?"

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): Is it unionized?

Mr Mahoney: No, Peel's not unionized. My colleague from Mississauga North asks the question somewhat rhetorically. No, they're not, but maybe somebody in this province thinks there's a little gold mine there. You can see why. It's a tragic thing to watch every day when you read about another local of some union that votes to dissociate itself from the New Democratic Party, that votes to pull the plug and says: "We no longer support these guys. These guys act more like Tories than Tories do." It's hard to imagine anyone would nickname Bob Rae as Preston Rae. But the unions are bailing out, so maybe you've got to look for some new fertile ground and just maybe the largest non-unionized children's aid society in the province is fertile ground for the NDP to move in and to get them—maybe. I don't know. Is that too cynical, folks? What do you think? Maybe. I'll try to get back to this.

We have some other questions that Mr Martins has asked me.

Mr Offer: They have stopped heckling.

Mr Mahoney: They have stopped heckling, I think. Now they're not just dumb; they're dumfounded. Anyway, there's a third question. Oh, that's not parliamentary, Mr Speaker. My apology.

Mr Offer: "Dumfounded" isn't?

Mr Mahoney: "Dumfounded" isn't? I don't know. I've been dumfounded. I've been dumfounded by some of the dumb things that these guys have been doing ever since they got elected. But I'll get back to the issue. The third question—

Ms Murdock: You have not been on the issue.

Mr Mahoney: Well, you see, that's the amazing thing: They don't think this is the issue. You think it's okay for somebody doing the same job next door and getting paid \$12,000 a year more; although I don't know if you do, because you're appealing the decision.

So what Dave Cooke is saying, when he wrote this letter, is: "We would really like to see all children's aid society employees be employees of the local children's aid society, because we believe in local autonomy. But, by the way, enclosed please find our cheque for \$537,000. How would you like to split it up among all those fine folk who work for you and give them a 17% pay raise, even though we don't agree with it?" What in God's name forced you to send that money?

Ms Murdock: The tribunal.

Mr Mahoney: The tribunal did not force you to send that money. There is no requirement in the tribunal's decision that says that you have to send that money. All the tribunal says is that in the opinion of the tribunal, an opinion that is not shared by the current government, the employees of those three CASs are public servants, Ontario public servants; they do not work directly for the local CAS.

Anybody can see the impact of that. If you look at the grid, if you look at the scale, you can see that there is a major impact. Now, how on one hand can Management Board say, "We don't agree with the decision of the tribunal and we're going to appeal it"? Follow me here. What happens if you win the appeal and all of a sudden the tribunal ruling is overturned and the decision is that the people who work for those three children's aid societies are now not classed as government employees but rather work directly for the local children's aid? Are you going to take that 17% back? Do you really think you're going to be able to do that?

It's absolutely incredible, the mistake that's being made, and I might add that we're only talking in this particular case about children's aid societies. What about all the other agencies that sit there and see the discrepancy that exists?

I only have a couple of moments left. I want to get these questions on the record on behalf of Peel children's aid.

The third question: "Is it now the government's position that public servants are a legitimate comparator for the determination of the salaries of transfer payment workers? How does this fit with the pay equity legislation?" Tell them it's not pay equity. "How does this fit

with the recently announced delays in the implementation of the pay equity policy?"

The fourth question: "How does the government plan to pay for these increases in light of its announced intention to reduce the allocations to transfer payment agencies by hundreds of millions of dollars over the next year or two?" We're going to give you a pay equity legislation, a pay equity increase to give out 17% increases, and then we're going to slash your budget down to the bone, and you're going to take it back substantially. You're going to take back more.

The fifth question: "What is the government's expectation of the municipalities in this situation, who have to pay 20% of the cost and in others that will inevitably unfold in the future?"

The final question: "What support is the government prepared to provide other CASs as they face similar demands for fair treatment from their own employees?"

The inequities are obvious. The problems of implementing the pay equity legislation are clearly right here in front of us, documented, and this government is totally, totally embarrassed on this and I hope as we wind down they can come up with a solution to be fair to all of the fine men and women who work for the 48 other CASs, children's aid societies, in this province.

The Deputy Speaker: There is still five minutes left.

Mr Mahoney: I thought we were out of time.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: No, he's not finished. He still has five minutes.

It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow afternoon.

The House adjourned at 1800.

Continued from overleaf

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Lundi 7 juin 1993

DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES

ET RÉPONSES

Négociations du contrat social

M. Rae 1187

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 1993 modifiant la Loi sur les mines, projet de loi 43

M. Chiarelli 1206

CONTENTS

Monday 7 June 1993

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Fish and wildlife management	
Michael A. Brown	1185
Youth employment	
Mrs Witmer	1185
Woodstock General Hospital auxiliary	
Mr Sutherland	1185
Community recreation funding	
Mr Cleary	1185
Land transfer tax	
Mr Villeneuve	1186
Senior citizens	
Mr O'Connor	1186
Agricultural land	
Mr Bradley	1186
Retail sales tax rebates	
Mr Arnott	1187
Alcohol and drug treatment	
Mr Wood	1187

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

Social contract negotiations	
Mr Rae	1187
Mrs McLeod	1189
Mr Harris	1190

ORAL QUESTIONS

Social contract negotiations	
Mrs McLeod	1191
Mr Rae	1191, 1194
Mr Harris	1194
Unemployment	
Mrs McLeod	1193
Mr Rae	1193, 1194
Mr Curling	1194
Economic policy	
Mr Harris	1195
Mr Rae	1195
Ontario Hydro	
Mr Conway	1196
Mr Wildman	1197
Automobile insurance	
Mr Tilson	1197
Mr Charlton	1198

Closing of tree nurseries

Mr Mills	1199
Mr Hampton	1199

Health care

Mrs Sullivan	1199
Mrs Grier	1200

Photo radar

Mr Turnbull	1200
Mr Christopherson	1200

Waste reduction

Ms Carter	1201
Mr Charlton	1201

PETITIONS

Retail store hours

Mr Eddy	1201
---------------	------

Pollution control

Mr Carr	1201
---------------	------

Gambling

Mr Cooper	1202
Mrs Witmer	1202
Mrs Fawcett	1203, 1204
Ms Carter	1203
Mrs Mathysen	1204

Seniors' health services

Mr Offer	1202
----------------	------

Public service employees

Mr Runciman	1202, 1203
-------------------	------------

Closure of agricultural college

Mr Ramsay	1202
-----------------	------

Children's aid societies

Mr Cleary	1202
-----------------	------

Bicycling safety

Mr Cooper	1203
-----------------	------

Community recreation funding

Mr Cleary	1203
-----------------	------

Northern health services

Mr Ramsay	1204
-----------------	------

Landfill

Mr O'Connor	1204
-------------------	------

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

Standing committee on estimates

Mr Jackson	1205
------------------	------

FIRST READINGS

Georgian-Simcoe Railway Company Limited Act, 1993, Bill Pr27	
Mr Jim Wilson	1206
Mining Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 43	
Mr Chiarelli	1206
Waubaushe Railway Company Limited Act, 1993, Bill Pr32	
Mr Waters	1206
Picton-Trenton Railway Company Limited Act, 1993, Bill Pr29	
Mr Paul Johnson	1206
Waterloo-St Jacobs Railway Company Limited Act, 1993, Bill Pr31	
Mrs Witmer	1206

THIRD READINGS

Pay Equity Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 102	
Mrs Witmer	1207
Mr Sutherland	1211
Mr Mahoney ...	1212, 1217, 1222
Mr Arnott	1212, 1221
Mrs Witmer	1212
Mr Curling	1213, 1217
Ms Murdock	1217, 1221
Mr Arnott	1218
Mr Tilson	1221

OTHER BUSINESS

Annual report, Office of the Ombudsman	
The Speaker	1187
Retail store legislation	
The Speaker	1191
Extended hours of meeting	
Mr Eves	1206
Mr Elston	1206
Mr Charlton	1207
The Speaker	1207
Visitors	
The Speaker	1219

Continued overleaf

CH 1234
X1
-123

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Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 8 June 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 8 juin 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

Table of contents

Table of contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears on the outside back cover.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Tuesday 8 June 1993

The House met at 1331.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS
GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): This past constituency week, May 31 to June 4, was different from any other I have experienced. My constituents in Oriole were distressed about how the NDP government was changing their lives, destroying their businesses and eliminating their jobs.

Mr Roly Ridler of Shaughnessy expressed his frustration over the retroactive nature of the huge increase in personal income tax. He said, "It's both unconstitutional and a breach of parliamentary tradition."

The issues varied but the message was always the same. Here are some other quotes from upset citizens:

"What is the so-called social contract and how will it affect public services?" they asked me.

A constituent on Havenbrook said: "The NDP and Bob Rae are making a shambles of this province. The sooner he is out of office, the better we will be."

From Dallington Drive, "What's the use, the government doesn't listen to the people, it does what it wants."

"I am sick and tired of the NDP," said a voter on Sheppard Avenue.

From residents on Parkway Forest I heard, "We hope that the NDP government will be removed from power for all its broken promises."

"Another example of incompetence," someone on Parfield angrily said over the NDP tax on car insurance.

A constituent who lives on Forest Manor Road summed it up this way: "Elinor, I am sorry. I am ashamed. I voted NDP last time. Never again."

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION WEEK

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Celebrations are taking place across Canada from June 6 to June 12 to mark National Transportation Week. This is a time to express support for all Canadians working in the transportation industry. It's also a time to reflect on the importance of transportation in our daily lives.

The theme for the 1993 National Transportation Week is "Transportation and National Prosperity," to underscore the significance of an efficient, effective and competitive transportation system to our economic prosperity.

National Transportation Week also provides an opportunity to pay tribute to those who have made outstanding contributions to transportation development. This morning I attended a ceremony to honour dedicated professionals in Ontario's transportation industry. Among those honoured was Lou Parsons, chair of GO

Transit and the 1993 Ontario Transportation Person of the Year. We in Ontario are extremely fortunate to have someone of such national and international repute as the chair of GO Transit.

Our transportation system is the cornerstone of our modern industrialized nation. Efficient transportation networks for all modes of transportation are crucial as we are prepared to compete in the global economy of the 21st century.

I would remind the Minister of Transportation that Ontario's national and international reputation as a leader in the transportation field, as demonstrated most recently by India's interest in sharing technology, depends on government commitment to renewing and enhancing our transportation infrastructure.

**UNITED FOOD AND COMMERCIAL WORKERS
INTERNATIONAL UNION**

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): I rise today to congratulate the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, in particular locals 175 and 633.

About two weeks ago I received a letter from Dave Killham, who is a former constituent of mine—I thought I'd use his name—indicating that the United Food and Commercial Workers union would be embarking on its fourth annual Leukaemia Walkathon that would be taking place throughout all of Canada.

The United Food and Commercial Workers union, locals 175 and 633, which have members in every community in the province, raised over \$275,000 last year—it looks like I have an infinite amount of time today, Mr Speaker—but they're working hard to do even better this year. It's throwing me off my time. There, it's starting all over again.

We have some of these members present today up there, working their way up. This walkathon was to raise money for the leukaemia research, which we all know is absolutely essential if this disease is going to be beaten. We know that, because there is infantile leukaemia, there's adult leukaemia, there's a whole host of types of leukaemia that are afflicting the population of Ontario that we need to work on to defeat.

The president of the United Food and Commercial Workers union is Michael J. Fraser, and I believe he's here. If he's not yet, he will be shortly. The secretary treasurer is Wayne Hanley and the recorder is Betty M. Pardy. Of course, I've already indicated that Dave Killham, who is my contact in all of this, is present somewhere in the building as well.

I'd like to congratulate the United Food and Commercial Workers union for the work they've done on leukaemia and to congratulate all of the unions in Ontario that work so hard to raise funds, either through

the United Way or through whatever other charities they work for.

STRATFORD FESTIVAL

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): Last week I had the pleasure of visiting the city of Stratford to attend the Stratford Festival. As the Tourism critic for the Ontario Liberal Party, I would like to congratulate all those people involved in what has become one of Canada's and Ontario's most important cultural and tourist attractions.

Because of time restrictions, I was only able to see two performances: Gypsy and King John. But I can tell you that I was very proud to see those in attendance standing to give continued applause to the cast and, in so doing, honouring the director, staff, management and board of directors for a job well done.

I would encourage the government and the people of this province to show their continued support for a great organization which is providing us with important cultural events and is also helping our economy by creating jobs and bringing in tourist dollars from all over the world.

But having put in a plug for the Stratford area, I would be remiss if I didn't remind the members that there is another area in the province that also has many tourist attractions, and that is the Quinte area. If you are looking for beautiful scenery, excellent food and accommodation, also great shopping, museums and a summer music festival, antiques plus many other things too numerous to mention, I would ask you to come and visit us in Quinte after visiting the Stratford Festival.

1340

BUDGET DEBATE

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I too would also like to congratulate those people who work so hard to try and cure cancer. I commend them for the job that they're doing.

My statement concerns the NDP government's move to repress the democratic process in Ontario by limiting public debate over the recent provincial budget.

The NDP government wasted hard-earned taxpayers' money to print and distribute propaganda that gives its version of the May 19 budget. The Premier claims the budget shows his government is committed to investing in jobs, people and services, when we all know that raising taxes and increasing the debt will only slow the economy and kill jobs.

The Premier also claims the budget is his government's fair and balanced approach to reduce the deficit. I would suggest there is nothing fair or balanced about the budget or the NDP's plan to limit debate of the government's budgetary policies.

The NDP wastes taxpayers' money to print and distribute its propaganda and refuses to listen to the people of Simcoe East and many other parts of this

province who want to express their views, concerns and opinions of the May 19 budget through their democratically elected members.

Don't the people who pay the bills in the province of Ontario count with this government? I thought this was the government that was going to open Queen's Park to those who'd never had an effective voice in the corridors of power. By limiting debate of the budget, the NDP is slamming the doors in their faces. There's nothing fair or balanced about the NDP approach to government in Ontario, and this propaganda has cost billions of dollars to send out.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I recently had the pleasure of attending a backyard barbecue at the Whitby Seniors Activity Centre. Homer, a retired worker from General Motors, was flipping burgers like he worked on the line at McDonald's. The centre was packed, as members had gathered for the first celebration of Senior Citizens' Month, a month dedicated to the proposition of sharing the experience, and they do, sir.

The centre, operated by the town of Whitby, is a recreational facility that's the hub of many seniors' lives. It drives seniors who line up for hours to sign up for their programs. Some live independently, and the centre can be the social hub of their lives. Some may not drive, but they're always there. The centre offers them lessons in line dancing, crafts, arts, physical and social activities. Personally, I'm looking forward to the strawberry social later this month, and I look forward to seeing Dot and Emma again.

Whitby is a good neighbours community, as is Oshawa, the two communities I represent. They support the seniors, and seniors' centres are a vital investment in our community. Our government has gone far in passing legislation to care for the elderly, to support their dignity and wellbeing. I can think of no better investment in dignity and wellness than money spent on the seniors' centre.

PORTUGAL NATIONAL DAY

Mr Tony Ruprecht (Parkdale): On behalf of the Ontario Liberal caucus, I rise today to recognize an important event that dates back over 400 years. It has been celebrated as Portugal National Day since 1880.

The celebration of the national day of Portugal is special and unique in the pages of history. Unlike some dates that commemorate an important political event, such as a declaration of independence or the end of a war, on this historic occasion we ask the people of Ontario to join Canadians of Portuguese heritage in the remembrance of the great, world-renowned poet and writer Luiz de Camões. Although he passed away more than 400 years ago, Camões left a living legacy of meaningful poetry of immortal beauty that has not withered with age.

We're all of course very cognizant and appreciative of the tremendous contributions that Portuguese Canadians have made to the development and growth of our province and country in the economic, spiritual and cultural fields. Yet as important as economic contributions are, the attention of Portuguese Canadians today is focused not on the prosperity and wealth that opportunities bring in Canada but on our democratic system of government, which allows the people in our multicultural society of Ontario to celebrate a national literary hero of their forefathers' original homeland as a right.

May this Portugal National Day today inspire us to pause more often to study and admire our writers and poets. Perhaps one day we might recognize that a new Luiz de Camões could be inspired as a result of paying tribute to the eternal de Camões whose remembrance we're honouring today.

[Remarks in Portuguese]

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): Baseball fans everywhere will know that Bo Jackson is making history this year. His remarkable comeback with the Chicago White Sox is amazing, given the fact that he's doing it with an artificial hip.

The orthopaedic surgery which replaced Jackson's damaged hip with an artificial one made of carbon, chrome and plastic is becoming more common every year. This year alone, almost 20,000 Canadians will get a second chance to lead a healthy, active life because of the replacement of hip and knee joints. Thanks to orthopaedic surgery, they will be released from pain and given back their freedom of movement and mobility.

The advances made in the field of orthopaedic surgery over the last decade are truly remarkable. On this coming Sunday, June 13, thousands of Canadians will be participating in a Canada-wide walk to raise funds for further research and education in joint replacement.

The walk, called "Hip, Hip, Hooray," raised over \$1 million last year, and in London alone 132 walkers raised \$50,000. This year's walk is expected to do even better.

The walk in London this year will again be at Springbank Park and will start at 11 am. The London organizing committee is still welcoming walkers, so anyone interested should call Barb Keim at University Hospital to get pledge forms and information.

The work we're doing in Ontario is remarkable. People around the world will gain from the research we're doing in medicine, especially in orthopaedic surgery.

NORMA HARRIS

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): It takes great courage to be a single parent, yet this is a task under-

taken by more and more Canadians today, a majority of them women, who get little recognition for their valour and dedication.

Today, I want the House to know about one single parent in my constituency of Cambridge. Norma Harris has been named Canada's Single Parent of the Year for 1992-93 by the international organization, Parents Without Partners. Not only that, but her son Joseph, who is 16, has been named Canada's Youth of the Year by the same group. The two are now in the running to be named the North American Parent and Youth of 1992-93.

Norma Harris has overcome poverty and unemployment to sustain herself and her children, who were aged eight, three and eight months when she first became single 13 years ago. She needed work so she trained as a lab technician, at some point holding down two jobs as well as caring for her youngsters.

She became involved in the organization, Parents Without Partners, and is now president of the Grand Valley region of the organization. She took courses in leadership to enable her to teach parenting skills to other singles.

I invite the House to join me in saluting Norma Harris and all parents who take on the task of raising their children alone. We should also salute young Joseph who teaches children at a Cambridge community centre and has designed a logo for the Grand Valley Parents Without Partners, a logo that appears on T-shirts and on pins that have been sent all over the world.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PRESS GALLERY EVENT

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege that I hope the other members will appreciate. I want to encourage members from all political parties to attend the press gallery's spring bash which is on June 16. I especially encourage members who don't get enough abuse in the Legislature or in their constituencies, particularly in their own caucus, or from the media itself, to attend this. It's always for a very good cause and I would encourage members to attend. It's June 16.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I regret that the member does not have a point of privilege, but it is certainly a point of public information, if nothing else.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

REPORT ON RACE RELATIONS

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister Responsible for Race Relations): A year ago tomorrow, June 9, former United Nations Ambassador Stephen Lewis presented a report to the Premier with recommendations to improve race relations in the province of Ontario. The Attorney General and myself were given co-leadership roles to implement Mr Lewis's recommendations.

In the recent speech from the throne, this government made it clear that it remains committed to providing leadership in fighting discrimination in all its forms. The recommendations of the Lewis report have been the focus for much of that commitment for the past year.

Since the Lewis report was released, the government has made real progress in meeting Mr Lewis's recommendations within a very tight time frame. We have built on important steps to help Ontario achieve a vision of equity and fairness based on mutual respect and understanding of one another.

The Lewis agenda provided the government with a complex challenge. It called for bold measures in a number of key areas—the criminal justice system, the workplace, education and training, community economic development—and in an overall approach to anti-racism. It stressed extensive consultation and restructuring. It demanded the commitment of many different partners working together and it required the political will to make what were sometimes difficult decisions.

1350

The challenge has been met. It has been met in spite of the current economic climate, scarce government resources and restructuring, and it has been met in spite of the fact that many of the deadlines suggested by Mr Lewis proved difficult to meet, as Lewis himself acknowledged they might be. Our government made it a high priority.

Virtually every one of Mr Lewis's 24 recommendations has been implemented or is under consideration. Some initiatives, by their very nature, will never be finished, nor should they be, for this government is determined that an effective anti-racism agenda will not and cannot be a one-time approach to a problem that has haunted society for an unconscionable length of time.

Therefore, on behalf of the Attorney General and myself, I am pleased to provide the following progress report. For purposes of time, I will briefly highlight some key initiatives. A complete update is available from the Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat.

The Race Relations and Policing Task Force was reconstituted with Clare Lewis again taking the lead role. A number of recommendations from a report released last November are in the process of being implemented; others are under review.

A new regulation on the use of force was enacted. The first class of recruits to receive extended training in use of force and race relations graduated at the end of March.

Last September, we struck an independent inquiry into race relations and the criminal justice system. The Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System is hard at work on an interim report on correctional services for youths and adults. The

commissioners have informed us that they will be releasing this report shortly.

In the spirit of the Lewis report, I'd like to mention the proposal to fund an African-Canadian specialty legal services clinic, which was announced by the Attorney General in early May. We will shortly begin our consultations with legal and community groups to plan with them for the establishment of this very important clinic.

A key recommendation in the Lewis report was employment equity, an initiative that had already begun with the appointment of the first employment equity commissioner, Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré, two years ago, who has held extensive consultations across Ontario. Very soon, I intend to stand in the House and proceed with the second reading of our employment equity legislation. At that time, I will also be releasing draft regulations.

The Ministry of Education and Training is developing mandatory policy directions for school boards and action plans on anti-racism and ethnocultural equity. This will be monitored closely by the minister himself.

The process of revising curriculum continues at every level of education. The Minister of Education and Training will be releasing one of several specialized resource documents on anti-racism shortly to school boards for teachers to use from kindergarten to high school.

The Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs have consulted extensively with minority communities and government ministries to develop a community development plan. This complements the government's overall economic agenda.

My colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs announced last weekend support for a black community credit union. This meets some of the economic concerns of the black community. This is an excellent example of community and economic development, and there are more concrete initiatives to come.

On a corporate level, we've announced the Cabinet Round Table on Anti-Racism. Fourteen members from aboriginal, minority and ethnic communities have been appointed to advise myself and a number of cabinet colleagues on anti-racism measures. Our first meeting will be held on June 15. I must point out that this is an unprecedented move by our government. For the first time, people from aboriginal, minority and ethnic communities will have direct contact with the political decision-making process. My cabinet colleagues and I look forward to working with the round table and benefiting from the counsel of its respected members.

These are only a few of the recommendations we've started, but like the issue of racism itself, which has haunted society for years, it will take time and, yes, continued dialogue to meet the problems head on. This

will be ongoing with the cabinet round table. Anti-racism and eliminating all forms of discrimination are a government priority.

The Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat began the work a few years ago and continues to lead the government anti-racism strategy. They will continue to work with grass-roots communities and organizations to curb and eliminate racist activity.

I'd like to close by saying that we cannot afford to sit by idly and hope only government measures will solve all of the problems that racism engenders. We must accept that each person living in our province has a role to play if we want to see our province free of discrimination, racism and hatred.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Statements by ministers? Responses? The official opposition, the member for Scarborough North.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): I was looking forward today, when I heard that the minister was coming to give us an update on the Stephen Lewis report recommendations.

I know this minister works pretty hard, but Madam Minister, I see this statement as a statement of apology for inaction, really. All through the minister's statement, she apologized for not meeting the deadlines. To begin with, these deadlines are not met because in the beginning they were quite unrealistic. We had said that in the beginning, that these deadlines are unrealistic. As a matter of fact, it was quite rushed, anyhow, but the government didn't have the gall, the guts, to come out and say it could not meet those deadlines. But here we are now saying that we're apologizing for that.

This interim report that the minister brought forward here today was supposed to have been here from January 1. It is almost the middle of June and we're making that kind of statement today.

Again, Madam Minister, I have raised in this House at times, with you and the Minister of Labour, about legislation about employment agencies. Nothing has been done. I don't think that you have the guts, nor does the Minister of Labour, to bring that legislation through about employment agencies. That continues to discriminate in the way of employment.

The tribunal backlog in human rights: We have seen a backlog created in the tribunal area. All that we have seen is a movement of a backlog there. Madam Minister, I hope you address that. The backlog continues, as we know, in human rights, with all the effort and money that we have there, and no statements have been made to say that there is not a backlog, as how detailed we are dealing with these cases, but they are backlogged, and as I continue to say, justice delayed is justice denied. The Ontario Human Rights Commission that's supposed to be looked at is not being looked at in that detail.

I saw in your statement here about African legal aid, black legal aid: It's a joke. As a matter of fact, the black legal aid people say that this is tokenism. I can't understand how we're going to have black legal aid. Laws are made for all people of our province, not for one set or the other. I would urge this government, do not patronize in that way. It's tokenism and we should eliminate that kind of situation. Don't be caught up in that. I would strongly support you to relinquish that tokenism there.

Again, you announce in here, I think—not you, Madam Minister, but the minister, I think, for Management Board or what his role would be—about the internship program that was targeted to address visible minorities and women, and talk about it's not cancelled but postponed for some years or a year or so. I regard this also as a situation when the cuts started in this economic time, and who got hit harder here? Those who were trying to get through the door, programs that you had put in place, the things that Mr Lewis had talked about, that people have no access to this to play a role in our society, things that will be instituted. The first thing you cut was that program that affects visible minorities and women about the internship program. I would like you to go back and revisit that because it is a mistake. You tried to address that, that it's only postponed for a year and I think that is extremely bad.

The anti-racism strategy: Two years ago you made bold promises that you were going to bring this anti-racism strategy about and that you were going to have all ministries have in place a strategy. I don't see that happening at all. Again, empty promises will not fulfil people's visions and dreams and realize their role in society. It's not happening. Your policy about anti-racism is not done.

1400

Employment equity: My golly, we know about that. If there is one thing that people are looking forward to have access to in society, it is work and jobs and opportunity of education. You have not brought this forward. I know you've promised regulations; we've heard about this. You have now been in power three years, with the authority to do things. You haven't done it. You've come to me, and I know you're dedicated to bring this employment equity. I don't think that front row is dedicated to do that at all. Even when they try to negotiate with the union, it is pushed back. If you need me at the cabinet table, I'll come and convince the Premier—

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): You had your chance.

Mr Curling: —and I will convince the Treasurer that employment equity is needed. Somehow, he feels he cannot address that.

Madam Minister, your apology has not been accepted by the people. You could have done better than that.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): When we heard that the honourable minister was going to be making a statement today, we were looking for something on Bill 79. There was a certain amount of excitement that in fact the minister was going to have the regulations for employment equity brought forward today. That would have been an announcement that people were looking for in response to the interest that has been raised about it. I guess maybe the minister still has time to get it.

She mentions in her statement today, especially in the press release part, the second reading of the employment equity legislation and release of draft regulations during this session of Parliament. There's still some more time. We just know that's something you haven't said before, because most of what you gave us today has already been said. Some six weeks ago, the ministry came out with a press release announcing the round table on anti-racism, saying much of what the minister has said today, and today we have it again.

However, I suppose when it's a slack day and the Premier doesn't have anything to say on the social contract and the Treasurer doesn't have anything to say about the failure in coming forward with other announcements that we're all waiting for this government to do, they've gone to the minister for race relations and said, "Come up with something," and you had to fill in. To that extent, we compliment you for trying to fill in.

By the way, the government has been committed to its fight against racism. The actions that are under way and in progress are in the right direction, and I think we all appreciate that we've got to do an awful lot more to counteract what's going on in the world around us. It's not a good scene. The member for Willowdale and myself, Mr Harnick and I, attended a Yad Vashem event last night in Thornhill. Seven hundred and fifty people were there remembering some of the tragedies of 50 years ago, the tragedy of hate. It was just racism at its worst when the Holocaust took place.

We haven't rid ourselves as a society of those very problems even today. I know that earlier this week, when our leader, Mr Harris, rose in this House, much of the question he was asking of the Attorney General had to do with racism. He raised questions about Ernst Zundel, that Ernst Zundel is still allowed to perpetrate his lies and perpetrate violence and that Ontario is one of the leading places for developing hate literature, hate literature that comes out of Ontario, with nothing being done about it. Mr Harris, in his question to the Attorney General, pointed to the very issue last week that the Attorney General has failed to act on a number of situations. The law sits there for the government to do something about it, and the government hasn't done anything.

I will quote from Mr Harris. He said:

"We have had anti-hate law for 22 years, and only

four charges have been laid and there have been only two successful prosecutions in that 22-year period. Some racist organizations, as we see this rise, obviously feel for some reason or other that they have been given carte blanche to spread their hatred in this province."

I'm quoting from Mike Harris, the leader of our party, who was talking in questions this week about the problems of this province and anti-hate literature.

Here we stand today in the House and look at what this government's doing, and we still haven't done anything about the hate that's coming out of Ernst Zundel's mouth and what he's doing to the Jewish people and other people in this province. It's not just an issue for blacks or whites. There's a whole spread of colours, multicultural people, where there is something that crosses all ethnic boundaries: Hate and anger and the disease of the mind that are still being perpetrated in our communities, where you have people, white supremacists—it's not just white against black. There's still something serious within our society that we as legislators have to fight. So I say seriously, Madam Minister, do more.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): Ernst Zundel still runs the printing presses. Paul Fromm still teaches school in Peel. The white Heritage Front still frequents bars and brings in members by racially slurring people. The Attorney General of this province and the Minister of Education don't have the guts to show some leadership to solve these problems. This is not worth the paper it's printed on if the government doesn't—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member's time has expired. It is now time for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My first question is for the Premier. Yesterday, in the face of all the ongoing confusion around the social contract, you assured us that the matter is well in hand. It seems that nobody has been reassured by the comments you made yesterday, Premier. In fact, we have seen that the value of the Canadian dollar has dropped by a quarter of a cent and interest rates are under new pressure. Investment analysts are saying that the falling dollar reflects the uncertainties in the market over your government's handling or mishandling of the social contract. Quite clearly, things are not well in hand.

I would suggest that for people to have confidence in your ability to manage this issue, time and specifics are of the utmost urgency. We need some assurance that in the statement you make tomorrow, we will have clear time lines and clear specifics of your government's action plan. I understand you have now acknowledged that there is legislation in the preparation stage and I ask that you clearly outline for us today what that legislation will contain.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I think that having said clearly earlier this week that I would have a statement to make later on in the week, and I indicated yesterday that I'd have a statement to make in the House, the honourable member should know that's clearly the direction we're taking. The Minister of Finance and I have stated as clearly and as categorically as we can that the money is coming out with respect to the estimates process this year and that we are determined, in response to the questions which you have asked and others have asked, to take the steps that are necessary in order to do that in the fairest possible way. I can assure the honourable member that tomorrow's statement will make that very clear.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, we are hearing, as you are, from all the transfer partners that are tremendously concerned about some of the possible scenarios, some of the ways in which you might obtain your \$2 billion in expenditure reductions. It is quite clear from everyone we speak to that the worst possible scenario for implementing your \$2-billion spending cuts is for you to simply impose the cuts on municipalities, on school boards, on hospitals, on colleges and universities, again without giving them the tools they need to review their total expenditures, yet apparently this is one of the three options you are still considering.

Apparently, you have told MPPs that you can cut in one of three ways, and one of the ways is by simply cutting the grants to hospitals, to cities, to municipalities, to school boards. You acknowledge that this would result in significant job loss, and that job loss would be even greater if they are forced to make those cuts, the full force of those cuts, when the budget year is half over.

Premier, I ask you to tell us, why is that option even under consideration? Why will you not simply rule out the option of dumping your cuts on to the transfer partner agencies?

1410

Hon Mr Rae: It would be unconscionable in the current circumstances, in my view and in the view of the government, to simply "dump" the cuts on to any group of people.

Having said that, I think it's important that we also recognize, in the meetings I've had, the discussions I've had, the various discussions that various line ministers have had at my request with a number of groups and individuals, that we've also heard—and I'm sure those people are also telling her the same thing—that they also want to have some flexibility with respect to how they manage in a difficult circumstance. They also don't want a totally centralized approach which doesn't leave them any room to move and to manoeuvre.

So finding the balance between a totally centralized approach and one in which the government simply walks away—obviously, those are two extremes which

are not acceptable to us. We are trying now to work with all of our sector partners, in discussions, in finding a solution that's fair and reasonable, given the fact that the coalition walked away from the talks last Thursday night.

Given that fact, I can say to the honourable member that we're going in a good direction. We've had some very good discussions and we've had some very good discussions with the cabinet—

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): Your caucus doesn't think so.

Hon Mr Rae: Well, I want to ask my caucus members: Is the member from Oriole correct when she says we're not going in the right direction?

Interjections: No.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Rae: All right. We're going in the right direction and there's good support for what we're doing.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, that balance is exactly what we've been calling on you to find for the last two months, and there was indeed a process that could have reached that kind of balance if you hadn't been so determined to find solutions at the centralized table. I must admit, I don't envy you the caucus meeting you would have had this morning as you now try and find the solutions to get out of this absolute no-win situation.

Premier, we understand that at least some of your colleagues would like you to resolve the issue by simply implementing broad legislation that would put in place the last proposals that the government negotiators put on the table and that the unions did indeed walk away from last week.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs McLeod: I ask you in all seriousness, do you not believe that approach would fail for exactly the same reason that the social contract talks failed? I'm asking, because I see that the noise may have distracted you from the question, and it's a serious question, the question as to whether or not you are likely to try and implement through legislation tomorrow, according to the request of some of your caucus at least, simply the government's last proposal. I'm asking whether you do not feel that is likely to fail for the same reason that the social contract talks failed; that the reason there was not agreement reached was because any broad-brush solution is not going to be fair and equitable and cannot be implemented across all of the sectors and all of those 9,000 individual collective agreements.

Hon Mr Rae: When I listen to the Leader of the Opposition, first of all she says she doesn't envy me our caucus meetings, and then she proceeds to say, "Don't do this, don't do that, don't do this, don't do that," and just simply criticizes; all kinds of speculation as to what

might or might not happen. I haven't heard a single constructive discussion from the Leader of the Opposition with respect to what's being proposed.

I would say to her, the government has substantive decisions to make. These are decisions that are clearly being made. We are making them, we will make them and we will then discuss them with the House after we've discussed them with our various social contract partners out there, employers and employees, as well as with the caucus and the cabinet.

All I know is that whatever it is this government does, whatever option is chosen, it will be roundly criticized by the Leader of the Opposition, because that's how she keeps her very disparate caucus happy. Don't tell me they all agree on anything. I haven't heard them agree on a single thing.

The Speaker: New question.

Mrs McLeod: It would seem to me, in spite of the Premier's rhetoric, that as we day after day put forward what we believe are constructive and balanced alternatives to this government's chaotic response, little by little it's starting to take. I actually heard the Premier, in a very moderate response to my first supplementary, getting very close to the alternative that we've had on the table for the last—

The Speaker: Would the leader take her seat, please. Second question, the Leader of the Opposition.

INSURANCE TAX

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My second question is also for the Premier. We remain concerned, particularly about the transfer agencies' ability to implement the cuts in the social contract, because they have already faced cuts under the expenditure control plan, as you're well aware, and also because of the hundreds of millions of dollars in new tax costs that those agencies face as a result of the recent provincial budget.

Premier, you have claimed that your budget's tax measures are tough but they are fair, but we find that hospitals that have already been hit by the expenditure control cuts are now grappling with the new cost of the insurance tax on their group benefit plans and on their liability plans.

One of the downtown Toronto hospitals has told us that the new insurance tax will cost them an additional \$330,000 per year. We do not yet have a clear total, but it is obvious that the budget's insurance taxes will mean millions of dollars in new costs for hospitals. I ask you, Premier, why did you choose to tax health care? Have you done any analysis on how this tax is going to affect hospitals across the province?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Mr Speaker, I'm going to refer the question to the Minister of Finance.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Here we go again. The leader of the official opposition

doesn't want any new taxes; wants a lower deficit; doesn't want any expenditure reductions. I just wish for once that when she asked a question, she would end it with, "Why didn't you do such-and-such?" She has yet to do that.

I would simply say to the leader of the official opposition that it is never popular to introduce tax increases. She and her government know that full well. I would just say to her that I believe that the package of tax increases that were brought in, while they were unpopular, were balanced, fair and responsible.

Mrs McLeod: Minister, what we keep trying to do is say, "Look at the implications of what you've done." We get increasingly concerned that nobody over there is adding up the total cost, the total impact of what you've done, whether it is on businesses or hospitals or school boards or municipalities. Nobody's putting it all together, and that's our frustration.

I can tell you that hospitals are not the only transfer agency that is going to be affected by your new insurance tax, and I trust that you have added up the cost. The school boards have told us that the total insurance tax increases will cost them over \$50 million, and again this is in addition to the expenditure control cuts and the social contract cuts that you're still looking for.

The insurance analysts have said that the insurance tax increases on group health and life plans alone will add one half of 1% to the average payroll cost. That, to us, means that based on a total \$43-billion public sector wage bill, municipalities, school boards, hospitals, and colleges and universities will have to pay an additional \$215 million in costs. That figure does not include liability, property or auto insurance tax increases.

I ask you, how much will your insurance tax increase totally cost the school boards, hospitals, colleges, universities and municipalities, and indeed the conservation authorities, whom we heard from this morning, who are also worried about the impact of your budget and your cuts? How do you expect people to pay for this?

Hon Mr Laughren: I simply will not allow the leader of the official opposition to get away with such a simplistic argument when it comes to dealing with the difficult financial problems we face in this province. If she thinks that she can stand in her place and—

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): How are you going to pay? That was the question. Answer the question.

Hon Mr Laughren: I realize that the members of the official opposition don't like being called to account for their lack of alternatives, but I'm going to insist on doing it. The leader of the official opposition puts her question as though there would be no implications whatsoever of simply letting the deficit rise without tax increases or very, very substantial expenditure reductions out there which would affect delivery of services

and jobs all across the province. So I would ask the leader of the official opposition in return: When she asks her final supplementary, would she please tell me what her alternatives are?

Mrs McLeod: No, because that's not the question. The question is to you, to the Finance minister, to the government, on the budget that you brought in. I am asking you, as you give the transfer agencies hit after hit after hit, whether you are adding up the costs and whether you are looking at the total impact on the people who are providing services to people across this province.

I would say to you that at least one third of the government's \$715-million insurance tax increase is going to be paid by the public sector, and to me this is simply another downloading of millions of dollars on to school boards and municipalities and hospitals and colleges and universities.

You have said over and over again that one of the focuses of the social contract discussions was to make expenditure cuts while protecting jobs. I would ask, given the millions of dollars that just these insurance taxes will cost the transfer agencies, how many lost jobs is that going to cost us?

1420

Hon Mr Laughren: For the last two weeks, we on this side have heard from the leader of the official opposition only what we should not tax and what expenditures we should not reduce, and how the deficit should be lowered at the same time.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): How many jobs, Floyd?

Mr Mahoney: How many jobs lost?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I want to tell you, Mr Speaker, when the leader of the official opposition talks to us about downloading, she's not going to get a very friendly reception from this side because, when they were in government, in good times, with record revenues coming in, they wrote the book on downloading, not this government.

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): Premier, I understand from, I think, some pretty informed sources that you either intend to table or are discussing tabling legislation on Monday; that at the same time as tabling that legislation indicating where \$2 billion can be found, you intend to encourage the public sector to return to the bargaining table to continue negotiations for up to 90 days or the legislation will take effect. Given the increasing uncertainty among the public sector unions over their futures, can you confirm that this is in fact your plan?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): No.

Mr Harris: You have sent out many signals that you think further discussions will be productive, that they will be beneficial, that there are still solutions that may be able to be found out there. Since you didn't have a contingency plan and you're trying to come up with one as quick as possible and, as I understand, you've continued to have feelers out there with the social contract partners, both management and unions, you will recall that I told you a number of months ago that you had to signal your intention to bring in legislation or that you meant business through some methodology, as Quebec did in its talks: "Here's legislation; unless we have a negotiated settlement by September, the legislation will take effect"; that that is the only way you would allow the union leaders to seriously negotiate away things they already had in their contracts, if union leaders could go back to their membership and say: "See that legislation? See that definitive plan? We were able to get you something better than that."

All the union leaders I've talked to, and I've talked to most of them who directly or indirectly have been at the table, have told me that is exactly what they needed, that there is no way they could go to their membership without knowing what your plans were and say, "We've negotiated a breaking of the contract we got you last year." If they did, they wouldn't be union leaders any longer.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the leader place his supplementary, please.

Mr Harris: Given that, Premier, do you finally now understand the bargaining process and what the union leaders are capable of negotiating, as they have told me and I'm sure they've told your negotiators? Are you prepared to be definitive and proceed that way to get meaningful discussion, so the leaders can go back to their membership and say "I've got you something better than this proposed legislation"?

Hon Mr Rae: I must say I feel that certainly our government has helped to do two things. Yesterday we drove the leader of the third party to read excerpts from Ned Pratt's poetry, and last night he was on the phone to all the trade union leadership in the province. So I think we're making good progress.

I would say to the honourable member, if he's saying that the trade union leaders that he spoke to—and I hope he will tell us or tell the scrums and so on which trade union leaders were advocating legislation in their conversations with him, because that's clearly the import of his question. He's saying that the trade union leaders whom he talked to were advocating strongly that the government should have brought in legislation two or three months ago. I hope you'll tell us exactly who those people are, because I think that would be a singular public service and would perhaps clarify the debate considerably.

Mr Harris: Premier, it wasn't last night; it's been

over the last number of months. I haven't phoned; I've been answering the phone as they've called me.

A couple of months ago I talked about options of attrition, last week I laid out that option for you and yesterday I defined it a little more clearly for you, whereby, through attrition, at the end of three years far more than \$2 billion could be cut from the public sector payroll in a logical, organized fashion. I gave you that option as one of the alternatives and I would ask you this: Have you looked at that alternative? Are you prepared to move in a more commonsense way than your trying-to-solve-all-the-problems-of-the-last-10-years-in-one-week approach? And if you are, are you prepared to move today to turn that corner, to move in a new direction and begin to permanently downsize the size and cost of government?

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to the honourable member that obviously any suggestion he makes is taken seriously, but I would say to him that all of the work we've done shows that attrition on its own won't deal with the problem that we face. While that might seem like an attractive and relatively painless option, in fact it is not sufficient to deal with the problem.

Mr Harris: I didn't say it would deal with all the problems. There are many other things that have to be done. It goes a long way, though, and a lot further than you're getting to start solving part of the problem. You continue to ignore those solutions.

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My second question is to the Attorney General. This spring our caucus launched our task force on crime, justice and community safety. At that point in time we released polling results that found that 65% of Ontarians believe that victims of crime are not being treated fairly by the courts. We outlined some of the parameters of the task force, we have circulated several thousand letters out there to solicit more opinions and in the next couple of weeks we begin travelling across this province and meeting with Ontarians across the province on this issue.

As you know, the standing committee on administration of justice has been studying a victims' bill of rights put forward by my colleague from Burlington South. We have heard in those hearings heart-wrenching testimony from victims and from families of victims who are pleading for government to help ensure that our justice system and our society do not victimize them a second time. Minister, will you support and enact the provisions of this bill?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I was also very pleased to testify in front of the committee and to talk about some of the things we were doing. In that testimony I indicated to the committee that it's my belief that these kinds of statements of entitlement without real programs are not very useful. We prefer to

expend our energy on developing the programs, expanding those good programs that we have, changing some of our processes in terms of the way in which our courts actually operate, the kind of information that individuals who have to appear before the court as victim witnesses have.

I told the committee that I am in the process of bringing forward a very extensive package of measures that will go some distance to resolving some of the issues that some of those testifying in front of the committee identified. They won't go all the way immediately because obviously we need to build incrementally through the system, and a lot of what we need to do needs to be done in conjunction with our federal counterparts, because many of the things that we are being asked for are in fact not in our jurisdiction.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Supplementary?
1430

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): The minister did present before the committee, and she's indicated in the presence of the de Villiers family and in the presence of the Mahaffy family, constituents of mine, that she feels that reforms of this nature are highly symbolic. Yet we've had an inquest into the three deaths around Jonathan Yeo, where clearly recommendation 129 states: "We, the jury, through the evidence that was presented, feel there must be a charter of rights for victims. The purpose of this charter is to stop victims from being revictimized." It goes on to set out some very practical things.

There are over 25 recommendation in this inquest that affect your ministry directly, yet we have no indication that you've read the inquest, that you have any agenda to bring in these necessary reforms. Every victim who has presented before the justice committee has reiterated that we need a victims' bill of rights, that it has substance and standing when the Attorney General's office embraces it, much in the same way that the Attorney General's office can make statements of zero tolerance for alcohol abuse and zero tolerance for assault.

When you make those statements within the law, then serious reforms and changes in our criminal justice system and victimization of our victims can be changed. It is within your power; it's clear evidence of that.

The Speaker: Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Jackson: I'm asking you again, Minister, on behalf of our caucus and on behalf of the families that have come before the committee, will you not consider making some of the necessary reforms that are within your power to do that will save Ontarians money, reduce the amount of victimization and provide a real sense of justice in this province?

Hon Mrs Boyd: I have indeed clearly committed myself to making many changes, some of them accord-

ing to the recommendations of various inquest reports, not just the Yeo inquest recommendations. What I am saying is that I prefer to take those actions that are directly going to be beneficial to the victims involved rather than make pretty statements about what their rights are.

We all have rights under the Charter of Rights. That is the major set of rights that all citizens enjoy. What we need to be doing is making sure that the rights of victims are being seen to be as important as the rights of the accused. That is one of the basic issues the people have with the justice system at the present time.

There are a number of measures, as I indicated to the member, that I am prepared to take and that I will be announcing in the very near future.

Mr Jackson: Quite frankly, that response isn't good enough. The fact of the matter is that women are victimized in our court system far more than men. You're the minister responsible for women's issues. When you say you're considering reforms, there are dozens of recommendations that have been presented in this House over the course of the last three years which your ministry has chosen not to consider. These are practical reforms which will help women.

When you suggested you have to balance off the rights of the criminal versus the victim of sexual assault, I must advise you to look at your ministry to see all the imbalances. Look at the horrendous number of dollars that are going from legal aid to assist rapists and others in this province for unnecessary aspects of their court procedures. Yet your victim services program, by your own ministry's admission, is inequitable, underfunded and inaccessible to most parts of this province.

For you to stand in this House and say that you have provided reforms and you're proceeding in those areas, when the experience, according to Marina Browning, the legal counsel for Barbra Schlifer—

The Speaker: Will the member place a question, please.

Mr Jackson: —who participated in assisting with the drafting of this bill says, "I have seen women destroyed going through our current legal system," when are you going to bring forward these reforms and embrace even some of the elements of a victims' bill of rights, which are within your power today to bring into this House, which won't even need legislation.

Hon Mrs Boyd: I will repeat what I said earlier in this House and also in front of the committee: Yes, I am prepared to bring forward reforms. Indeed, many of the suggestions that the member has made we have already begun to put into effect in terms of streamlining the court process and ensuring that there is a better sense of justice and a better knowledge of what is going on in the courtroom.

I would say, however, that the best kind of protection we can give victims of crime is ensuring the integrity of the prosecution of those criminals. We can only do that if we follow the Charter of Rights and guarantee that those who are accused of crimes have the legal services that are guaranteed to them under the charter so that we don't lose those cases because they are not able to be prosecuted with integrity.

CHILD CARE

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Mr Minister, I listen to you, the Treasurer and many members of your caucus day after day telling myself and indeed the residents of Ontario in general that you are committed to child care.

Budget 1992 promised up to 20,000 new subsidized child care spaces. To this date—and I want you to listen very carefully—we have but 400 of those subsidized spaces. Budget 1993, and I'm quoting from Budget 1993, stated "another 14,000." But that really is not "another," it's part of the 20,000. So we're not talking about 34,000; we're talking about up to 20,000.

Promises, promises; numbers, empty numbers. I ask you, Mr Minister, will you give the 25,000 families waiting in line with real needs in this province, not a promise but the spaces that you have pointed to and promised? How are you ensuring that the thousands of spaces, not just the 400, are flowing to those who stand and wait, wait to get off social assistance, wait to get on with their lives?

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I'm very happy that this question has been asked, because I can tell the member opposite that in fact the actions we are taking to stabilize the child care system are having, we believe, some significant results.

The member would know that recently we announced an expansion of the criteria with respect to 8,200 of the 20,000 child care spaces, and I can tell the member that two things are happening under that expansion of those criteria. The last figures that I received were that some 3,000 of those spaces have already been implemented in a very short period of time as a result of some aggressive steps that we've taken in the ministry working with municipalities.

What we are expecting will happen, again over the very near future, is that implementation of a number of those subsidies will result in spaces that would be freed up on the waiting list being taken up. We expect that will deal with the waiting lists that are out there. I can tell the member that we are proceeding with that in a very aggressive manner and we are intent on getting those spaces out and used.

Mrs O'Neill: Those, again, I think are rather empty words. We've got 20,000, 17,000, 3,000 perhaps. Mr

Minister, I bring to your attention a long-standing request that's on your desk or in your files. It's but an extension of a success story, with a waiting list of over 200 at this moment. It meets all the criteria of your government's initiatives. It meets the criteria for Jobs Ontario Capital, child care and Jobs Ontario Training. It also meets your government's preference for non-profit. This project will result in young people graduating from the social assistance lifestyle and following paths to enter the workforce.

Mr Minister, I bring to your attention but one of many projects awaiting your decision: the Woodroffe Avenue high school child care project in Ottawa-Carleton. Will you give these sole-support parents, mostly women, and their children a chance to change their lives, to follow their dreams, to reach their full potential and to become contributing members of our community? I ask you that directly, Mr Minister.

Hon Mr Silipo: The short answer would be, yes, that's exactly what we are trying to do and what we are in fact doing. We are looking right now at the capital allocations for this fiscal year, and I expect we'll be making decisions on those fairly shortly.

Again, I would just say to the member that if she thinks that the implementation of 3,000 additional child care subsidies and spaces in a matter of weeks is not some significant improvement in the system, then I'm not sure what it is that she's talking about, because we have been and will continue to be quite aggressive in our steps and in our efforts to ensure that we stabilize the child care system on the way to making some of the more significant reforms that we intend to bring about.

We're going to be proceeding with those steps, and certainly we'll look at the specific proposal that the member has outlined and any others that we know are out there as a way of continuing our efforts to improve the quality of child care in this province.

1440

RACE RELATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Attorney General. Last week I raised the disturbing situation of a Jewish proprietor in Kitchener who had been threatened and harassed by neo-Nazi youth. This past weekend at a nightclub in Toronto, two rock bands publicly promoted hatred against blacks and Jews in their lyrics. Youth attending the concert gave Nazi-style salutes to the band.

Each of us as legislators has a responsibility to send a clear signal that we will not tolerate in our province racist language and actions anywhere in Ontario. Many believe that your silence and your government's silence is becoming deafening: no statements, nothing in the Legislature, no actions, no statement on behalf of you or your government as to what you think of these actions. We need leadership in this province. The people

of this province are crying out for leadership and for action. What have you done to provide that leadership?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I'm flabbergasted that the member opposite would suggest that this government has said nothing and done nothing and been silent about this kind of issue. Certainly I have spoken out on it, as has the Premier, as has the Minister of Citizenship and, frankly, I know most of our members in their own areas.

We are absolutely disgusted by the same kinds of racist statements that are distressing you. We have the same problem that you had when you were government and that the previous government had, in that the tools we have under the Criminal Code are extremely clumsy tools to enable us to deal with this issue.

The police are investigating individual incidents as they occur to see whether or not under the Criminal Code there are charges that can be laid. We provide legal advice to the police on those issues, and when there is the availability of charges, we will certainly prosecute vigorously.

There are differing opinions in the legal community about the ability that we have to use those tools. I want to assure the member that we are consistently looking at each incident on its merits and that the Solicitor General and I are as concerned as you are to find a way to show vigorous action.

Mr Harris: The minister today made a statement on implementing recommendations in the Lewis report, but there was nothing in that statement about the incidents that are taking place around the world and here in Ontario. The member from Markham and the member from Willowdale today in response to your statements expressed that concern as well, as they have expressed publicly on a number of occasions.

Minister, I want to tell you this, that as a father of two young boys myself, I am extremely concerned about the rise of racist, anti-Semitic incidents involving our youth. I share the concerns of parents in Mississauga, where Paul Fromm teaches. I share their concerns.

I share the frustration of police officers, who do not feel that you or your ministry are supporting them by laying charges when they bring you what they feel is enough evidence to lay those charges.

Minister, if this government is doing all it can, why have there been only four charges laid in the 22 years that we've had an antihate law?

Hon Mrs Boyd: Well the member might ask, since during the largest portion of that time his own government was in power. The real issue is that the law itself is not the kind of law that lends itself easily to a successful prosecution.

The member shakes his head, but you talk about a rise in these incidents. The B'nai B'rith this year—

Mr Harris: You are a disgrace. Do you want me to go back and blame Leslie Frost for this too?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the leader of the—

Hon Mrs Boyd: —indicated that in fact there was a drop—

Mr Harris: You want me to blame Leslie Frost for this. You're pathetic, the whole lot of you.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): You've got no guts. You were a bunch of big talkers when you were over here.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Willowdale, come to order. New question, the member for Downsview.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): My question is to the Minister of Finance. The recession has been very hard for small businesses and in particular for the construction industry. I've received a letter from a businessman in my community who was facing a crisis because of problems relating to finding capital. Banks, as you know, have been unwilling—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Would the member for Downsview please take his seat.

Interjections.

Mr Harnick: Just carry on in the same vein and let Mr Fromm just keep teaching. He's just a credit to the teaching profession, a credit to the Ministry of Education.

The Speaker: I asked the member for Willowdale to please come to order. Would the member for Downsview place his question, please.

Mr Perruzza: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It's sad to see that the same courtesies we extend to them they don't extend to us.

The Speaker: Would the member please just place his question.

Mr Perruzza: Absolutely. However, as I was saying—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the member for Downsview take his seat. There are occasions when it's a little difficult to maintain order in here, but it would be immensely helpful if, after order is restored, the member could simply place his question.

Mr Perruzza: As I was saying, banks have been unwilling, in large part, to make capital available to builders. As an alternative, this individual would normally approach a private investor for capital through a mortgage broker. However, new regulations have

placed such onerous conditions on the smaller lending institutions that this is no longer an option.

My question to the minister is, what steps are being taken to assist small businesses and in particular small building companies to access capital and to help get Ontario back to work?

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): That's easy: Nothing. That's an easy question.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Despite the rantings of the member from Oriole, the member asks a very good question, because there were amendments to the Mortgage Brokers Act, which I don't expect the member from Oriole to understand, under the financial services review because there were problems, quite frankly. But specifically the banks, the trust companies, the credit unions and insurance companies are exempted from that change in regulations.

What is absolutely necessary is that people who invest through a mortgage broker understand very clearly the nature of the investment and the rules that apply to mortgage brokers. We think that with the change in the regulations, it will benefit legitimate construction companies and investors and consumers alike, as well as the mortgage brokers who are following the rules as they are supposed to do. So there's been no attempt to hamstring the source of capital, but rather to make the rules uniform for everyone and to make sure that people can be secure in the investments they make.

Finally, I would ask the member to look at the 1993 budget at the way in which we've structured alternative sources of financing, such as the Jobs Ontario Community Action fund, which goes around the traditional lenders, such as banks, to access money through the Jobs Ontario Community Action fund.

1450

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources, who's attempting now to defect to the Tories. As he returns to his seat from an attempt to move across the floor, I want to say that today we were visited in our caucus by representatives of the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario. We are reminded, both by them and by the Premier, that there are requests at all times for some types of options to provide public services in a more effective and efficient way and in fact to find ways which will serve the public in the best way possible and save money.

I know that the minister has had a chance to meet with the representatives as well, and I would ask him today, since he is one of the proponents of eliminating the conservation land tax rebate, if he accepts the provisions of the plan put to him by the representatives of the conservation authorities of Ontario and how soon

we can expect him to move on their recommendations.

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural Resources): In answer to the member's question, we appreciate very much the cooperation that the conservation authorities have extended so far. We have received their proposals. We're very interested in what they have to say. After we have had a week or so to review those proposals and to perhaps match them with some of our own thinking that has been going on internally, we'll be prepared to respond.

Mr Elston: So far, the thinking internally by the Minister of Natural Resources has ended up in the elimination of the conservation land tax rebate program. In my area alone, the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority will lose some \$113,000 and the Grey Sauble authority will lose some \$250,000 in rebate. It may be necessary for these authorities to get rid of that land just to pay the back taxes owing.

If these people have to sell this public asset, which is now open for every person in Ontario to access, how can he tell us that he's not willing to move quite quickly into areas that are suggested for changing the way in which services are delivered to protect the public trusts of lands which have been both donated by the people to conservation authorities and purchased by conservation authorities in past years under the regimes, I might add, of both Liberal and Conservative administrations which saw the importance of protecting the integrity of a public system of land holdings?

Hon Mr Hampton: I feel compelled at this time to correct some of the impressions the member may have tried to create. Conservation authorities may not dispose of conservation land without the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. So while we appreciate that conservation authorities may have strapped budgets, just as virtually every government in North America these days has strapped budgets, there is no imminent threat to conservation lands and no imminent possibility that conservation lands will be sold.

We're quite willing to work, both in the short term and in the longer term, with conservation authorities to deal with these sensitive issues. Everyone must share in the types of financial burdens that Ontario is faced with and that Canada is faced with, and I expect that conservation authorities will do their part.

The Speaker: New question.

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): My question also is directed to the Minister of Natural Resources. I would just like to say before asking the question that members of the association are present here today in the gallery and they have an extreme interest—it's not only their interest, but a matter of time and pressure on them—to get a solution to this problem.

They feel, that they have in fact given you a solution to the problem. But the problem is more than their

program for success. The real problem is that you have to initiate a meeting of your ministry, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Environment and Energy and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, to bring all the parties together that are now controlling conservation in the province of Ontario.

What I'm asking you today is, would you please tell us that you are going to bring these ministries that affect the control of conservation together and come out with a policy that our leader, Mike Harris, has recommended for a number of years, the one-stop shopping where there will be one central control for all these functions? Would you do that, Mr Minister?

Hon Mr Hampton: Again, to the member from the Progressive Conservative Party, we have held more than a couple of meetings with representatives from the conservation authorities. We have met with individual conservation authorities. We have invited conservation authorities to put their collective thoughts together. We're very interested in the positions that conservation authorities have put forward.

I would only say that there are other views. For example, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists may have a slightly different view from conservation authorities. For example, municipal officials may have slightly different views. What we are trying to do is to put together a system of operation which all of these very legitimate organizations will have an interest in working with and in promoting.

Mr Jordan: At the present time, there are up to 11 different ministries and government agencies that are entangled in the provision of environmental services. You can imagine, the frustration to developers, to any person trying to do business in the province of Ontario, trying to get approval. You go to the Ministry of Natural Resources and they send you to the MOE. You go to the MOE and they send you to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. It's a very frustrating procedure. I'm not saying to take the associations' answer as the only answer. I'm saying, will you bring the people involved together and make their proposal part of the solution?

Hon Mr Hampton: When we invited the conservation authorities to meet a month ago, it was for this exact purpose. I would only like to say that the existing system, which no doubt provides for long delays in terms of development approvals, which provides for all sorts of entanglement and duplication, was not a system that this government created. It was a system that was created by the Progressive Conservatives when they were the government and a system that was furthered by the Liberal Party when they were the government. All we're trying to do now is to sort out a cost-effective way of dealing with this issue that governments some time ago should have put their minds to.

RECYCLING

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-

South Hastings): My question is to the Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet. I have an article from the Picton Gazette that came out on June 1 but really is a June 2 copy because they always get it out a day ahead of time. Anyway, it says that more than 150 homes operated by the Ontario Ministry of Government Services in Prince Edward Heights are no longer going to have blue box recycling at their doorstep. This is a result of Prince Edward county's decision to stop providing that service, and indeed they've already collected the blue boxes. The claim is that it's due to funding problems, and I understand from the article that the ministry no longer will fund blue box recycling at Prince Edward Heights.

I would like to ask the minister, the Chair of Management Board, if indeed this is so, and if it's not, if something could be done to reinstate blue box recycling at these more than 150 homes at Prince Edward Heights.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I thank the member for Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings for his question. I guess his constituents would certainly be upset at being informed that they're not any longer going to have a blue box program because of some action of this government.

1500

Let me start out my answer by assuring the member that first of all the blue box program will be restored for the residents of Prince Edward Heights. In part, this problem arose because the county was confused about the tax status of the 150 homes in question, but the Ministry of Municipal Affairs does in fact pay taxes to the county for those homes. In addition to that, the Ministry of Community and Social Services had agreed to pay the special fee charge that the county wanted to continue collection of the recycling boxes.

We will get this misunderstanding sorted out with the county and ensure that the program continues.

ASSISTED HOUSING

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): I have a question of the Minister of Housing. Minister, are you aware that you are squandering millions of dollars in the form of waste in the non-profit housing program? Vacancy rates are now the highest they've ever been. In Oshawa, for instance, the vacancy rate stands at 5.8% and yet you over-allocated non-profit housing units by 180%. In general, the marketplace is vastly different than it was in the late 1980s when we had an acute shortage of housing. Today that shortage no longer exists, and in some areas in fact we have a surplus.

Your latest announcement of 20,000 units could ultimately end up costing taxpayers well over \$8.4 billion over 35 years. On top of that, your ministry cannot account for the actual costs involved in building

non-profit housing units. They simply cannot verify the actual costs. In short, your ministry is operating in the dark and, we suspect, getting ripped off in the process.

Minister, I ask of you, are you prepared to call for a moratorium on the construction of new units until you are able to provide the people of this province with the real answers for the questions we're asking?

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): I hope members of the Legislature will note that the Liberal Party has shifted its position and no longer supports the production of non-profit housing in this province. We are going to support the production of non-profit housing in this province.

There are increases in vacancy rates, and we have discussed that in this Legislature on many occasions. If the Liberal critic on Housing took note of information available from CMHC as long as a year and a half ago, he would note that the vacancies are at the upper end of the market. Is he suggesting that we leave those tens of thousands of people who are in increasing difficulty in the housing market without any hope of affordable housing when the private sector is not capable of meeting their needs?

We are going to continue our program, not only because it meets needs and creates affordable housing, not just for this year but for decades, but it also is producing thousands and thousands of much-needed construction employment in this province.

Mr Cordiano: It is very clear that this government has mismanaged this program and has used nothing but incompetence to guide itself. It's very clear, because the auditor is pointing out repeatedly, that you are wasting millions of dollars. The auditor pointed out that the cost of construction has decreased in central Ontario by 16% while over the same period the cost of constructing non-profit housing units has increased by 9.5%. In total, you're about 30% over what the market is costing out there for a non-profit housing unit.

I might say this: We are very supportive of the non-profit housing program, but we're not supportive of waste and incompetence and mismanagement. We are dead set against that. This minister and this government are guilty of that very thing: incompetence and mismanagement.

I say to the Minister, are you prepared to call for a moratorium? Because, quite frankly, the very people who supported this worthwhile program, even they are questioning what you're doing. You're incompetent, you're wasting resources—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member conclude his question, please.

Mr Cordiano: —you're jeopardizing the non-profit housing program. We support it, but we don't support your mismanagement.

Hon Ms Gigantes: I know that the Liberal critic is

new to the Housing portfolio and therefore he cannot be expected to have informed himself that the Provincial Auditor's report covered years which were mainly years of Liberal administration and that the problems we are now having in working out how to provide all the information on a development-by-development basis, which we have promised to provide to the auditor, is that under the Liberal administration the information wasn't kept. We have to go back now into the files, way back to 1986 in many cases, to try and get that information. We can't do anything about the fact that this was not administered properly during the Liberal regime.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): I have a question for the Minister of Education and Training. The minister introduced Bill 4 on April 21. He knows this is an omnibus act to change the Education Act. It's got more than 20 important amendments to the act. It affects junior kindergarten, child care in our schools and special education with special reference to hard-to-serve students. It has a retroactive clause in it that talks about young people and their parents having to pay for education, if this bill is passed, retroactive to June 2, 1992, over a year ago; a retroactive clause.

It passed second reading on June 3 and was referred to the standing committee. We had our first meeting yesterday, really, with reference to the bill. The standing committee has allowed, because of the government members on the committee, with I think the support of the minister, only three days, less than 15 hours of public hearings—day and night, mind you—for this bill with all of these issues.

I have a question for the minister: This party, this government talks about the importance of public input. I have to tell you that the chairperson of the special education advisory committee went before the committee yesterday and said they had never ever been consulted on this bill.

There are some choices that you have. You can either give us summer hearings—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place her question, please.

Mrs Cunningham: —you can separate out the special education part of the legislation, or you can just say that this bill is far too extensive and we cannot deal with it before the end of this sitting of the House. I think you should consider all of them. Will you consider dealing with this legislation in a way that the public can in fact be heard by this government in public hearings over a reasonable period of time extending into the summer?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): That sounded like a multiple-choice question, and we don't use multiple-choice questions in our school system any more. I think the member and the

members of the Legislature should understand—and I know the critic for the third party does—that many of the provisions, in fact just about all of the provisions of this bill were in bills that were already before the Legislature. It's not as if any of these issues are brand-new in Bill 4; they've been before the Legislature for well over a year, if not two years, now. The member can say that they want public hearings during the summer, but the reality is that they've been holding up a lot of this legislation for a long period of time. It's absolutely essential that we get through some of these items through the Legislature.

Of course, I'm more than willing to sit down with the opposition critics—the time lines have been negotiated with the opposition parties—and look at their amendments. The member from the third party knows that I'm more than willing to compromise in order to get legislation through the House and to benefit the kids of this province.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Pursuant to standing order 34(a), the member for Renfrew North has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Environment and Energy concerning Ontario Hydro's decision, supported by the Ontario government, to offer deep discount rates to certain major industrial power users in Ontario. This matter will be debated today at 6 pm.

PETITIONS

GAMBLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition from people opposed to casino gambling, the way I'm opposed to it. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions," and once again, "voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I agree with the sentiments of this petition, therefore I will be signing it, affixing my signature at the bottom.
1510

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have a petition from St Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hanover:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Further petitions? I would also like to remind members there are many private conversations going; it makes it very difficult to hear.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I have a petition here signed by many people from my riding, retirees like Hester and Don Warne, students like Rob Halpin, retirees like Ambrose Ferren, and other good, hardworking people like Bing Wong, and they say:

"Whereas we feel that the Canada-US free trade deal has done immeasurable damage to the province of Ontario and the economy of that province, causing a loss of more than 45,000 jobs in Ontario alone; and

"Whereas we feel the proposed North American free trade arrangement will have an even more devastating effect on Ontario, resulting in a loss of not only more jobs but also reduction of our environmental standards, our labour standards, our social standards, our workers' rights and our overall quality of life;

"We petition the Legislature of Ontario in Toronto to fight this trade deal in whatever way possible, whatever

means possible, and petition the House of Commons in Ottawa to stop this deal now, and we ask Drummond White, MPP for Durham Centre, to present this petition on our behalf to the Ontario Legislature."

CLOSING OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I am continuing on a daily basis to bring forward petitions that have been sent to me from my constituents in Timiskaming. These are addressed to Premier Rae, Treasurer Laughren, Minister Buchanan. It says:

"We, the undersigned, request that you seriously consider reversing your decision to close the New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology."

I will affix my signature to this.

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1923, seven Ontario bands signed the Williams Treaty, which guaranteed that native peoples would fish and hunt according to provincial and federal conservation laws;" like everyone else, "and

"Whereas the bands were paid the 1993 equivalent of \$20 million; and

"Whereas that treaty was upheld by Ontario's highest court last year; and

"Whereas Bob Rae is not enforcing existing laws which prohibit native peoples from hunting and fishing out of season; and

"Whereas this will put at risk an already pressured part of Ontario's natural environment;

"We, the undersigned, adamantly demand that the government honour the principles of fish and wildlife conservation; to respect our native and non-native ancestors and to respect the Williams Treaty."

That's signed by people from Minesing, Hillsdale, Phelpsston and Toronto, by 14 signatures, and I've affixed mine to it.

GAMBLING

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition signed by 52 residents of Oxford, and this petition was forwarded to me by Rev Dave Snihur, who's the minister at the College Avenue United Church in Woodstock, and it opposes casino gambling.

BICYCLING SAFETY

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the Parliament of Ontario would make it mandatory for every cyclist to wear a helmet when riding on a public road; and

"Whereas the imposition of this proposed helmet law would create a nightmare from an enforcement standpoint,

"We, the undersigned, your petitioners, call upon the

Parliament of Ontario to reject this proposed helmet bylaw."

It's signed by 47 constituents and I've also signed my name to the petition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): "To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

This petition is signed by 56 people and I now affix my signature.

BICYCLING SAFETY

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): I have a petition that reads:

"Whereas we, the undersigned, support the voluntary use of bicycle helmets promoted as part of a comprehensive bicycle safety program; and

"Whereas we, the undersigned, oppose the province's plan to mandate the use of bicycle helmets as being an excessive restriction of personal rights to choose for ourselves as guaranteed under the Constitution."

CENTRES D'EXCELLENCE ARTISTIQUE

M. Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa-Est): J'ai une pétition adressée à l'honorable lieutenant-gouverneur et à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

«Nous, soussignés, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition ci-incluse aux présents documents contenus aux volumes 1, 2 et 3 contenant les documents et signatures d'appui :

«Nous demandons que le maintien, la viabilité et la croissance du Centre d'excellence artistique de La Salle et que le développement d'un réseau de centres d'excellence artistique en Ontario, qui sont les composants essentiels à l'avancement socio-économique, artistique, culturel et linguistique de notre société de langue française en Ontario, soient à tout prix assurés académiquement, appuyés politiquement et encouragés financièrement.»

Quelque 6000 signatures et j'y ai apposé ma signature.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Gov-

ernor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and Grenville, members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 433, employed by The Sampson House in Gananoque, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat the public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I've affixed my signature in support of this petition.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I've got a petition here:

"Whereas we feel that the Canadian-US free trade deal has done immeasurable damage to the economy of Ontario, causing the loss of 45,000 jobs in Ontario alone; and

"Whereas we feel the proposed North American free trade agreement will have an even more devastating effect on Ontario, resulting in a loss of not only more jobs, but also a reduction in our environmental standards, our labour standards, our workers' rights and our overall quality of life,

"We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, in Toronto, to fight this trade deal with whatever means are possible, and we petition the House of Commons in Ottawa to stop this deal now."

It's been signed by such notable people as Doug Harvey and Lynn Jacklin and many others, and I affix my name to this in full support.

1520

GAMBLING

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition signed by residents of Eglinton riding:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address

the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I affix my signature to that petition.

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): I have a petition signed by 238 students of St Patrick's high school in my riding. It reads as follows:

"We, the graduating students of the Sarnia riding, believe that accessible education is a priority. We believe that large increases in university-college tuition create an elitist education system that only the wealthy can afford.

"Therefore, we demand fiscal responsibility and monetary restraint by the New Democratic Party of Ontario in the development and funding of new programs and unnecessary legislation. Funding to such actions should be terminated and those funds should be diverted to post-secondary institutions until the economic climate proves otherwise. An investment in education is an investment in the future."

GAMBLING

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition from 66 people from Brighton township and Murray township:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour,

which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I have affixed my signature.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I'm very happy to add my signature to this petition.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HEALTH INSURANCE AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'ASSURANCE-SANTÉ

On motion by Mr Morin, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 44, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé.

Mr Gilles E. Morin (Carleton East): This govern-

ment is looking for ways to reduce expenses and save money. I have a recommendation that will save this province millions of dollars in the long run. I have just introduced a bill which mandates a new health card or OHIP card with photo and expiry date. These added features to the health card will greatly assist the Ministry of Health in dealing with fraud and ineligible cardholders. It will also ensure the regular update of addresses, the lack of which is a major problem. Problems regarding the health card have been brought to the minister's attention repeatedly. It is time to take notice and to act decisively against the abuse and misuse of our health system.

KITCHENER-WATERLOO
FOUNDATION ACT, 1993

On motion by Mrs Witmer, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr14, An Act respecting The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation.

PETERBOROUGH CIVIC HOSPITAL
REPEALS ACT, 1993

On motion by Ms Carter, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr76, An Act respecting Peterborough Civic Hospital.

HUMAN RIGHTS CODE AMENDMENT ACT
(SEXUAL ORIENTATION), 1993
LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT
LE CODE DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE
(ORIENTATION SEXUELLE)

On motion by Mr Murphy, the following bill was introduced for first reading:

Bill 45, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code with respect to Sexual Orientation / Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne en ce qui concerne l'orientation sexuelle.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? No?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): This bill amends the Human Rights Code in two respects. First of all, it adds sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination with respect to harassment. Secondly, it amends the definition of "marital status" in the Human Rights Code in order to permit and obligate private sector companies to extend employment-related benefits to the same sex partners of their employees.

1530

MUNICIPAL AMENDMENT ACT
(TAX EXEMPTIONS), 1993
LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT
LA LOI SUR LES MUNICIPALITÉS
(EXONÉRATION D'IMPÔTS)

On motion by Mr Jordan, the following bill was

introduced for first reading:

Bill 46, An Act to amend the Municipal Act to provide for Tax Exemptions / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités pour prévoir des exonérations d'impôts.

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): This bill amends the Municipal Act to allow local municipalities to pass bylaws exempting land occupied by museums from municipal and school board taxes. Upper-tier municipalities may similarly authorize an exemption from taxes levied for their purposes.

CITY OF NORTH YORK ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Perruzza, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr74, An Act respecting the City of North York.
STRATFORD, HURON AND BRUCE
RAILWAY COMPANY LIMITED ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Elston, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr30, An Act respecting Stratford, Huron and Bruce Railway Company Limited.

CAMBRIDGE-GUELPH
RAILWAY COMPANY LIMITED ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Arnott, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr26, An Act respecting Cambridge-Guelph Railway Company Limited.

P.O.I.N.T. INCORPORATED ACT, 1993

On motion Ms Poole, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr37, An Act to revive P.O.I.N.T. Incorporated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY
TIME ALLOCATION

Mr Charlton moved government notice of motion number 3:

That, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House in relation to Bill 164, An Act to amend the Insurance Act and certain other Acts in respect of Automobile Insurance and other Insurance Matters, the standing committee on finance and economic affairs shall complete clause-by-clause consideration of the bill on the first regularly scheduled meeting of the committee following passage of this motion. All proposed amendments must be filed with the clerk of the committee prior to 12 noon on the abovenoted day. At 5 pm on that same day, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further amendment or debate, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. Any divisions required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 128(a). That the

committee be authorized to continue to meet beyond its normal adjournment if necessary until consideration of clause-by-clause has been completed. The committee shall report the bill to the House on the first available day following completion of clause-by-clause consideration that reports from committees may be received. In the event that the committee fails to report the said bill on the date provided, the bill shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House.

That upon receiving the report of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, which question shall be decided without debate or amendment, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading.

That two hours be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill. At the end of that time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I'm sure during the course of the debate this afternoon we will hear from the opposition benches a number of comments decrying the government's action to use time allocation on Bill 164. Therefore, there are a number of things I wish to point out in my opening comments to this debate this afternoon.

The opposition has accused the government in the past of stifling debate by the use of time allocation. Mr Speaker, I want to suggest to you that we started the process of having a careful look at what, in my view, is the very irresponsible way the opposition parties, and both of them in this House, have for the course of the last two and a half years since the beginning of this Parliament, abused what they like to refer to as the traditional practices of this House. I'd like just to give you a few examples of the kind of attitudinal change that has gone on in the way that members deal with questions in this House.

1540

Mr Speaker, you know, because you've been around for quite a number of years now, that from time to time there is controversial legislation before the House. When that controversial legislation is debated, it is inevitably debated at second reading and from time to time extensively during public hearings and clause-by-clause. But traditionally in this House, with very few exceptions, the third reading stage of debate is a stage which has been used with very careful exception by opposition parties.

You'll recall the days when the Conservative Party was the government for its last term, between 1981 and 1985, for example, when during the first session of that Parliament the average debate on third readings was four minutes. That was the average over the total number of third readings done.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Order, please. Order. All members will have an opportunity to participate. The government House leader has the floor.

Hon Mr Charlton: During the second session of that Parliament, the average time spent in third reading debate was 10 minutes. During the third session of that Tory Parliament, the average time spent on third reading was 47 seconds. During the fourth session of that Parliament, we spent an average of three minutes on third reading debates.

It is true that there was some shift for about two years thereafter, during the accord period when the Liberals first became the government and they were being supported by the New Democratic Party through the accord process. Then you'll recall that in 1987, the Liberals won a majority here in the House.

To look at a comparable period to this one, in the first session of that Parliament that lasted from 1987 till 1990, we had a somewhat significant increase in the average speeches that we saw occur in this House on third reading. We jumped all the way to seven minutes for the average debate on third reading. During the second and last session of that Parliament, we had another significant jump.

There were a number of very controversial pieces of legislation done during that period, and we jumped to an average debate on third reading of 15 minutes, with all of the controversial legislation that was done in that last session, including the auto insurance legislation, which was the father, if you like, of the need for this debate.

I want to talk to you now about what the opposition parties here in this House have been doing on a fairly consistent basis and an increasing basis throughout the course of this Parliament for the last two and a half years.

During the first session of this Parliament since the election in 1990, the average debate on third readings of legislation from this government started—and I say “started” because the first session was the best session—at an average of 48 minutes. In the second session, the average third reading jumped from 48 minutes to 122 minutes. So far during this third session of this Parliament, the average has jumped from 122 minutes to 171 minutes, over three hours.

This is just a very basic reflection of an intentional tactic, on virtually every piece of legislation, by the members across the floor.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It is my submission to you that this motion brought by the government House leader is out of order. It does not comply with the standing orders in that it states as part of this motion that the committee be authorized to continue to meet beyond its normal adjournment if necessary until consideration of clause-by-clause has been completed. That essentially means the committee

be authorized to sit after 6 o'clock. There's no standing order that permits that to happen. The only way that could happen is if there was some extension of the hours of the House, and that hasn't happened.

The Acting Speaker: As far as I can make out, the motion is in order. We are debating the motion now to provide time allocation in this Legislature and that is what this debate is all about.

Mr Harnick: Am I wrong, Mr Speaker, that we are allowed to sit here in committee after 6 o'clock?

The Acting Speaker: This is a specific order of the House that we are debating at this particular time. Should it pass, then we will be bound by what is in the government's motion.

Mr Harnick: My only point to you, Mr Speaker, is that what the government House leader is trying to do is contrary to the standing orders. He's putting the cart before the horse, so to speak. He needs to get the extension of the hours before this becomes valid.

The Acting Speaker: That could very well be an argument that you could bring forth to this debate when the turn for the honourable member comes about. At this point in time, we are listening to the government House leader.

Hon Mr Charlton: I made a number of points about what I see as a very intentional strategy on the part of both of the opposition parties to delay the legislative process in this House. I think it's important that I now address myself to the specifics of the case before us, Bill 164, because I think it's an important example of what I've been talking about, although we haven't gotten yet to third reading on Bill 164.

Bill 164 is a piece of legislation that, first of all, this government is committed to passing, and we intend to.

Mr Harnick: Why have you been delaying for two years?

Hon Mr Charlton: I'll address those issues and I'll take as long as the member across the way might wish.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. I want to remind all members that interjections are absolutely out of order. The government House leader has the floor and we will all have the opportunity of debating.

1550

Hon Mr Charlton: This piece of legislation was introduced in this House in December 1991. One of the members across the way who chose to interject a couple of times during that process was one of the members with whom we consulted a year ago—a year ago right about now, as a matter of fact, or about a month from now, in mid-July—about our efforts to get second reading debate done last summer so that the committee to which this bill was referred could have fairly extensive hearings over the course of August and September of last year.

The member raised the question in his interjections about why we had taken so long to proceed with this legislation. It's because the opposition, at every step along the way, blocked its progress. That's why this time allocation motion is here, because at every step along the way the opposition has blocked the progress of this legislation.

We took the bill into the House for second reading last September, and after passing the bill for second reading last September, we wanted to proceed with public hearings during the session. Again, to address the member's question about why we've taken so long to deal with this bill: because the opposition parties insisted that the hearings be done during the intersession.

The House leaders representing the members across the way, last December, after we finally agreed to hold off the hearings and hold them in the intersession, agreed that this bill would go to committee for three weeks: for two weeks of public hearings and one week of clause-by-clause. That's what happened in February of this year. We had our two weeks of public hearings, as all three of the parties had agreed, and then we went into clause-by-clause.

At the end of that first week of clause-by-clause—and I say "first week" because it isn't all that occurred—because of the opposition tactics, which brought no value to the bill, we were on clause 2.

Since that time, I told the opposition House leaders the first time we met this spring that I was prepared to see this bill stay in committee for a few more days to finish clause-by-clause so that the opposition members could have some additional time.

We have now doubled the number of hours that was agreed to by the opposition for clause-by-clause, doubled the time, voluntarily, and last week, although I must admit that neither of the opposition House leaders was at the House leaders' meeting—they were substituted for; the chief whip for the official opposition was there, and Mr Carr for the third party was there. I told both of those representatives at the House leaders' meeting last week that on Thursday afternoon I would be tabling the time allocation motion on the auto insurance legislation, and I told them further that if we didn't get some clear indication from the committee by the end of that day about a time line to finish the bill, I would proceed to debate this motion either today or tomorrow.

Mr Harnick: Your nose is growing. You're going to trip on it.

Hon Mr Charlton: Absolutely not. That's exactly what happened last week. If the member for Willowdale doesn't like the truth, then he should start dealing with his conscience. His colleague standing in front of him, the House leader, will confirm that's what happened at the meeting last week, even though he wasn't there. I'm sure the member for Oakville will not want his nose to grow.

It's been 18 months since we introduced this legislation. As a matter of fact, as best as we've been able to determine—and we've done some checking—in terms of consultation, this piece of legislation will be the most-consulted-on single bill ever passed by this House when it passes in the next couple of weeks.

The consultation process has been a very valuable one, but I have to make some positive and some negative comments in that respect. The consultation process has been an extremely valuable process, but it was a valuable process not because of the participation of the opposition members on the committee here; it's been an extremely valuable process because of the other stakeholders who have participated on an ongoing basis over the course of the last year and a half in a very important, extensive consultation.

As a result of the consultations with all of the stakeholder groups—the lawyers' groups, the insurance company groups, the consumers' advocates and the victims' advocates—we introduced a number of amendments to the bill itself. We also released a revised draft regulation as a result of those consultations.

Further, as a result of a real eagerness on the part of a number of the stakeholders—the insurance industry, the consumers' association and again, the victims groups, ARCH—

Mr Harnick: ARCH didn't even like the bill. You couldn't even get them to say it was a good bill.

Hon Mr Charlton: ARCH sat down on our task force along with the others and worked out a wonderful set of proposals around rehabilitation, long-term care, extended medical, all of the things that should have been done originally in the Liberal legislation, all of the things that they avoided doing and all of the things that could be in place now if it weren't for the obstruction going on on the other side of the House.

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would just like to give the government House leader an opportunity to perhaps correct the record on a statement he made a few moments ago. He is quite correct in that Mr Elston, the Liberal House leader, and myself were not current at House leaders' last Thursday morning. However, I do have his own minutes of the House leaders' meeting in front of me, which I'm reading. Mr Carr, as he points out, is the deputy House leader for our party and Mr Mahoney happens to be the whip of the Liberal Party and are quite entitled to attend House leaders' meetings per se.

I want to read the agenda, because he made the point—he made it quite clear—that this motion would be called on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week. Under the heading "Committees," it says: "The government House leader will table a time allocation motion for Bill 164 this afternoon. It will be called if no other agreement can be reached." I don't recall ever receiving a telephone call

from the government House leader this week at all to discuss what agreement could or could not be reached.

He also has a schedule set out as to what items will be called this week. If he planned on calling it on Tuesday or Wednesday, why doesn't it appear there? Tuesday, June 8, it says Sunday shopping. It doesn't say, "Time allocation motion on Bill 164, if necessary."

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Eves: Wednesday, June 9, it says, "Capital Corporations Act, second reading." If you look at the business for today—

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Would the honourable member for Parry Sound please take his seat. It's not a point of order. I hope it contributes a bit to the debate. Let's continue. Time is of essence here. The government House leader has the floor.

Hon Mr Charlton: I stand by the comments I've made. The discussion last week at the House leaders' meeting was very clear in terms of my intention to move to deal with this time allocation motion this week if something didn't come out of the committee in the way of an agreement around the remaining time last Thursday.

In addition to that, I'm going back to where I was when I was interrupted, in terms of talking about the process this bill has been through. The process of consultation and amendment in terms of public stakeholder group input into this piece of legislation has been extensive. Unfortunately, none of that process has happened in the legislative committee, because the legislative committee, as I understand it, is still stuck somewhere around clause 12, after two full weeks of clause-by-clause hearings. All of the productive work that's been done on this piece of legislation, unfortunately, has been done outside of this place, in consultation with the stakeholder groups.

That is not as it should be. It would be very useful if we could make the committee process in this place relevant to the things that the stakeholder groups are saying and prepared to see done as positive changes to our legislation, but unfortunately the opposition parties have not allowed that process to happen.

1600

We have proceeded with those consultations, because of their stalling tactics, unfortunately, outside of this place, and those consultations have been extremely useful and helpful to the government. The amendments we've tabled to the legislation itself, some of them reflect concerns that were raised by the insurance industry, some of them reflect concerns that were raised by ARCH and other victims' groups, some of them reflect concerns that were expressed by the consumers' association and rehab people.

In addition to the legislative amendments which we've tabled, we also were able, as a result of those consultations, after one year of our release of the original draft

regulation, to table with the committee a significant revision of those draft regulations for the committee's help in its considerations of the bill.

In addition to that, I mentioned a few moments ago the task force which was set up in February which brought the insurance industry and the victims' groups and the consumers' association together at one table—a task force that was run by them, not by the government—where they sat down together, in a way in which this legislative committee hasn't had any success at all, and hammered out some very difficult issues of contention between them around rehabilitation, long-term care and extended medical. A package of recommendations in that task force report, over 100 of them in all, is a very good, positive and significant input into the debate around this legislation. Unfortunately, we've had none of that positive kind of input from the committee process here.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): You've hardly ever been there. How would you know what's happened there?

Hon Mr Charlton: I didn't sit at the task force every day, either.

Mr Elston: Tell the whole story.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Charlton: It has been a lengthy process, but it is a process that is going to draw to a close. It is a process that must draw to a close. It's time the opposition members asked themselves what it is they're trying to do. What is it that opposition members are protecting by continuing to stall on this legislation?

One of the things they're protecting is unindexed benefits. Every day that goes by without the passage of this legislation, there is a new individual out there somewhere who is injured, who, at the end of the day, because of the date on which his or her accident occurred, will be stuck, because he or she is totally or significantly disabled, with unindexed benefits for the rest of their lives. Every day that this legislation is stalled, we continue with unindexed benefits.

Every day that this legislation remains unpassed, we continue with a piece of legislation—and I say these words carefully for the House leader opposite, who was the author of the current legislation. Every additional day, we have people out there—children, students, homemakers and the unemployed—who, yes, under Bill 68 get a minimum benefit of \$185 a week unindexed, but not access to the kind of fruitful, useful benefits that are set out in Bill 164 in all of those cases.

This bill should pass and it's going to pass within the next couple of weeks so that we can get on with the process of sitting down with the insurance industry and implementing this legislation in the best interests of the drivers all across the province of Ontario. The process has gone on far too long already. I have been patient throughout the eight weeks since the House returned and it's time to deal with the inaction and the indecision that exists in

the opposition parties around a benefit that's very important to the people of this province.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Elston: I have heard a number of speeches made in this House by a number of people, some of them very animated because of things that have taken place or not taken place, but I have never heard a piece of work like this from a person like the government House leader in all of my life. I have not been here for ever—I have been here since 1981—but I have been faced and confronted with a number of ministers from the opposition side of the floor. I was here during the sojourn of—

Mr Harnick: Don't leave, Brian.

Mr Elston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The government House leader and the minister responsible for this piece of work is now leaving. He doesn't even have the courtesy to listen to anybody who wants to talk to him about this thing.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. That's not a point of order.

Mr Elston: He has chosen to show the greatest of disrespect for this Legislative Assembly by doing his motion and then walking flat out on this process. Mr Speaker, what are we supposed to do?

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Point of order, Mr Speaker: On that same point.

The Acting Speaker: Order. It was not a point of order.

Mr Wiseman: Well, then you should have ruled him out earlier.

Interjection: He did.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Bruce.

Mr Elston: We now know what the government House leader thinks of the Legislative Assembly and how much importance he believes and his party believes there should be for honest men and women to have their say in here about items of public policy. What they have basically said is they don't want to listen to anything that has a possibility of making Bill 164 even somewhat more reasonable to deal with.

Let me start by dealing with the issues that the minister and the government House leader raised, one about the delay in committee. I have not been the critic for this area except from the beginning of this particular session of the Parliament. I went into the committee meetings relatively new to, although not unfamiliar with, the auto insurance material because I have been, of course, as was noted, responsible for its conduct while I was a minister of the crown. But on each day in which I have been involved in that committee, on each occasion when I had the opportunity to speak—and was, in those days, also speaking in conjunction with members of the opposition and indeed some of the members of the government party—we had

passed amendments to the statute which have been agreed to, sometimes proposed by opposition members and agreed to by members of the government.

Anybody who knows about the operation of the public committee system here will understand that there cannot be the passage of an amendment to a bill unless at least some of the members of the government agree, either actively by voting in favour of the amendment or—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Shouting at one another across the floor will accomplish absolutely nothing. The member for Bruce has the floor. Please let him proceed.

Mr Elston: As I said, we cannot pass an amendment to any legislation unless the majority of the members of the committee vote in favour of it. I must note that from the time of my involvement, as recent as it is, in particular with respect to 164, each day had occasion for the passage of an amendment which has added something to the benefit of the implementation of this statute. For the minister to say that he's been more than patient with the stalling when he and his colleagues have agreed to accept amendments which we have proposed would not be to give credit to the committee process at work, and successfully at work.

On occasions in the committee, while the minister says we were stalling, his people, his parliamentary assistant and others, had to stand down particular sections while they went away to consult with their own legislative advisers on what the effect or impact of a proposed amendment would be. In fact, if there was a stalling going on, it was the government, which didn't understand what the sections would mean with an amendment attached to it. They would go away—in fact, left for a week at a time—and while they said they would undertake to get back to us before the committee again was brought back to work, we would not hear about their reply to our proposed amendments until we actually got into the House.

At one point, I asked the honourable minister to explain to us the effect of certain activities around certain things that were being discussed with the insurance industry, because there was a close association established between the minister, as he has rightfully admitted, in consulting with the industry about certain parts of the bill. There were certain questions unanswered as we went into the committee. When we asked him to tell us what the result of that was going to be so that we could examine the bill with the knowledge of all of the decisions that were being taken by the executive council of this province, the minister said, "We will get back to you." But he didn't.

1610

We couldn't deal with the bill until we knew what his deals were going to result in with respect to the legislation, so we gladly held the legislation in abeyance while

he went and did his business. I congratulate him for consulting, but don't blame us for the delay.

There were raised by the member from Willowdale particular questions of what was going to occur as a result of challenges to the Ontario motorist protection plan. He raised them reasonably, because the Court of Appeal in this province is now deliberating upon several questions of interest which might very well influence the way in which the OMPP is delivered in the province today.

It was a reasonable question, in my view, and I supported the member from Willowdale as he raised time after time the point that we should wait to hear what is happening so that we can then determine whether or not the threshold which is envisioned under 164 should reasonably be amended or should be left alone.

These are not the tactics of a group of people who are bound and determined to delay at any cost. These are the actions of opposition who are requiring the government to come to account for the overall program which is put before the people of the province to be consumed by them.

Do you know, not only does this act, when it comes into force, require certain things to occur, like the loss of economic loss rights for the injured accident victims in their courts, but it requires the public, every man and woman in this province, to pay for the mistakes of the New Democratic Party? That's what is so unconscionable about the movement which is now undertaken by the government House leader.

We're not delaying. We're examining, we are critical, we have an eye for detail which we believe will influence badly the outcomes of accident victims' rights and needs. That's clear for any reasonable person reading the committee Hansards. The record is there.

I had in fact on some occasions the support from the member from Durham Centre, Mr Wiseman, or is it Durham West? I'm not certain where exactly his riding is; he's from one of the Durhams. And I was glad for his support when we amended the notice provisions from the companies to the individual accident victims.

We, as rural representatives, had some real concern about the fact that there was a five-day notice provision if certain steps were to be taken against the interests of the accident victims. Instead of the five days' notice, both Mr Wiseman—I'm sorry, the member from Durham West—and myself agreed that there has been a certain deterioration in delivery under the Canada postal service with respect to the outlying areas in this great country of ours.

Mr Speaker, while the federal authorities can boast that perhaps there are some advantages to delivery in the larger urban centres, people like me, who represents Bruce county, a rural, outlying area, and yourself, who represents S-D-G & East Grenville, as it is now called, know that sometimes smaller communities aren't served as immedi-

ately by Canada Post as they used to be.

So there was a reasonable public policy decision taken in the committee by me, in conjunction with my colleagues from the Conservative Party, and supported in the end earnestly by the members of the government caucus. We amended that section and it was reasonable so to do. That was not a stall. That was really a decision taken to amend the bill to make it more palatable for all of the people of this province—hardly a delay—and I invite anybody who wishes to look at what has taken place to examine the record in committee.

Let's just stop for a moment and then go back beyond this past summer. Let's take a look at the whole historical narrative of this 164. If you really, as a reasonable person, stopped and investigated the record, you would find that this 164 is not in the format that was originally proposed. Not only that; neither are the original drafted regulations which were a companion piece of this particular legislation. Changes galore.

In fact, their amendments are probably this thick. Page after page after page of correction of inadequate drafting that was put in place by a government that was harried and hurried in trying to cover up its great retreat from the public auto insurance which it had determined, in the election of 1990, to foist on the people of this province.

In this House there are actually some members who weren't here before 1990. Unfortunately, that is the case. Some of them I have great, great affection for in the sense that they are dedicated and well-meaning and well-intentioned people. But they don't recall everything that happened before 1990 in terms of debate. For instance, during the election of 1990 everybody in the New Democratic caucus saw Bob Rae arm in arm with, hugging the member for Welland-Thorold and saying what a great champion he was of the cause of good as he opposed the bill which I was responsible for.

I admit fully that the Bill 68 which was passed—I wasn't wrong, but the bill which I passed will have as many inadequacies as any other humanly set-up system. It should be improved, it should be brought forward. You can make improvements to that, if you want, or you can do as you're doing, Bill 164, but you've got to admit publicly that you are trading off major rights which innocent accident victims used to have to pay other people benefits. The most seriously injured in our province of Ontario will be left without coverages which they are today entitled to have.

The member from Hamilton Mountain, the government House leader, has indicated here that, every day that we delay, certain things are taking place which are unconscionable. But if anybody here would be fully explanatory of the nature of auto insurance, they would fully understand that the real area of changes to be contemplated by the government is all under the regulation.

If it wants, for instance, this government can move by

regulation to amend schedule C. If they think \$185 a month is not enough for an individual, they can change schedule C, the schedule of benefits, by regulation. It need not be done here. If they think that there are some inadequacies with respect to the amount of rehabilitation, it can be done under the regulations without coming into this place. If they want to change other of the accident victims, the so-called no-fault benefits which were initiated originally by the government under the Progressive Conservatives, they can be amended under the guise of new regulations to the bill which is currently in place.

Why would the member from Hamilton Mountain stand here and say that people are being prevented from taking advantage of new benefits when, under his control, he can change all of those benefits without resort at all to this particular place? He could do it tomorrow. In fact, you could do it this afternoon if you got all your cabinet people together. You could do it this afternoon, tonight. They could get that regulation passed and they could clear up a whole series of difficulties. Indexation of benefits could be changed under the regulations. It seems to me what these people are doing is not accounting for all of the things that could be done if they wanted to have them done.

What we have here is a government House leader who has run wild, run rampant with his blatant passion to get through his one piece of legislation, 164, at all costs, not only to the people of this province who are looking to the government to provide some protection both against cost increases and against the loss of rights in setting right a state of affairs which has been interrupted by automobile accidents, but he has taken a shot at the ability of men and women to come to this place and argue the public position which they hold, sometimes—in fact, most often as a result of the way this administration is now developed or evolved—of contrary opinion.

1620

If it were known, if the people on the government side of the House were allowed to speak, there would be a whole series of individuals joining the chorus that says, "The government has lost its way, the government has lost its principles, the government is not standing for the things that I ran for as a New Democrat." Those new members of the New Democratic Party who found themselves elected after 1990's election would speak and they would say, "That is not my way," because there are a number of those people for whom I have a great deal of admiration because they hold very fervently and strongly a particular ideological position. I don't always agree with the things that they hold most dearly—that's the nature of this business—but I do not for a moment stand for an assembly which will not allow them to stand freely and put their disgust on the public record so that their constituents who elected them know full well that they also oppose what the government of this province represents in this issue or any other.

It's interesting: The New Democrats have really chosen—I shouldn't say "the New Democrats"—Bob Rae and his House leader and the people who really pull the strings around there or spring the traps or pull the ropes or whatever it is that they do, have really—

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): Just say "the government."

Mr Elston: No, it's not the government. There's a series of individuals, I say to the member from Cochrane North. It's not the full government. I speak with members of the administration, I speak with members of the government caucus, and we have some very frank discussions. I'm not betraying anything to let people know that there are a number of individuals who hold very fervently and strongly their original positions on which they were elected to serve their constituents in this place.

But what the New Democrats have done, what their change has been, is to stop anybody from speaking on any particular subject, but to choose various locations for some dissent to be exhibited. There would be more speakers on this motion who would condemn an end to the discussion of the public policy issues around Bill 164 if they were allowed. Now the government House leader and the various ministers tell their members, "You have a 20-minute speech—make it five," and when it comes time to delivering your dissent: "I'm sorry, we don't have time for you. We don't want to hear your dissent. You've told me, that's enough. Keep it quiet, don't embarrass me."

The government party has become a party of designated dissidents. You can't disagree with any of their policies any more unless you get the seal of approval from their administrators. It is unconscionable what I have seen happening to the New Democrats and as a result it is unconscionable to have this type of time allocation motion brought before us to end the public debate with respect to 164.

Before I get back to the details of this motion, I would like to raise an item of concern to me. It was attempted by way of point of order by the member from Parry Sound, the House leader for the third party, and was not seen to be a point of order. Perhaps technically it is not a point of order, but it is an indication of the manner in which this House is being manipulated by the government House leader for his own purposes and for the pure political purposes of the New Democratic Party's chief administrators.

Mr Speaker, I read to you the orders of the day for June 8, 1993, and there listed is the government notice of motion number 4:

"Mr Charlton—resolution—That, notwithstanding standing order 9, the House shall continue to meet from 6 pm to 12 midnight on June 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23 and 24, 1993, at which time the Speaker shall adjourn the House without motion until the next sessional day."

The second item, number 22:

"Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading, Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping. Hon D. Christopherson," as the minister responsible.

Those two items appear on the daily schedule of business and it is, if anybody has been in opposition, the schedule by which we plan the meetings and attendances for our various members who are responsible for whatever there is that comes to the House. The House leader, in the way things are run currently, of the Liberal caucus and the chief government whip are often sort of the designated attendees to override the situations where someone has inexplicably been called away to important government business, important business in a constituency or called to meet government ministers or whatever happens. We generally try to make ourselves available whatever the issue, but we program all of our members' schedules around the daily events.

Last week on Thursday in the House leaders' meeting, there was not one mention that this time allocation motion would be called this week. We were understanding, although we had not seen it, that there was something being drafted, and I give that to my friend the member from Hamilton Mountain. We knew that something was coming because he has been threatening us with this for many, many moons indeed. But there was not one mention that we should have someone here responsible for auto insurance to talk about the conduct of the business. If I were able to plan it somewhat better, I would have called in some members of the committee who served not just in the last few days but also people who were here some time ago who could have added to the discussion about how much work was done and about how many people did show up.

For instance, I am just repeating secondhand information, but I am told by some reasonable people who have objectively reviewed the proceedings of the committee hearing schedule that well over 80% of the deputants who came in front of the committee at hearing times were opposed to the way Bill 164 was put together, and that as a result of some of those deputations—mostly, I guess, to the parliamentary assistant, who probably had to sit through all of them, unlike ministers who are not punished with having to listen to everything—there were probably, there are in fact, some of the amendments which are still pending in front of the committee that resulted from those public deputations. But I'm told that some 80% of the people were against. I am also told that some of the amendments drafted by my colleagues from the Progressive Conservative Party resulted from some of those public presentations when it became clear to the people who had been discussing Bill 164 with the government that they had run out of their options in terms of negotiating a reasonable position on various issues unresolved, in their favour, by the minister.

I would have had those people here. They could have told us how much had taken place, how much activity and time were spent in trying to understand what it was going to do to the broker community, what it was going to do to the cost of this product, what it was going to be doing to all of the people who have been advocating on behalf of various accident victims' groups. Those people would have had the historical narrative to provide to this debate today to determine whether or not the member from Hamilton Mountain is being exactly precise with his description of what has gone on with this particular bill.

Mind you, it's interesting to me; I know he's not being totally accurate with all of the things that have intervened from the time this was first introduced. For instance, he hasn't told us how many changes have been made. He hasn't told us about the fact that just until two weeks ago he was still talking about possible changes to the threshold, and anybody who knows what's going on in this legislation knows that the real key to this area is in fact the threshold. I have no problem acknowledging that. I have no problem acknowledging the fact that under Bill 68 there were a whole series of people who were not happy with the threshold that was determined under my leadership. That's the way things are. Sometimes people agree and sometimes they don't. But I understand that the threshold is an interesting part of the legislative scheme; it is critical.

What we now know is that until just a few days ago, there were discussions that were going to determine whether the minister was going to change one of the most critical aspects of this particular legislation, and that tells me we had not been long enough in determining whether or not Bill 164 had enough public debate.

Well, we still really don't know where this bill is going to end up. The minister and the member from Hamilton Mountain, the government House leader, who said he was going to be back here—he has certainly still not appeared some 25 minutes later, and I suspect he doesn't care to listen to any of the materials that I am offering him as a way of—

1630

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): Order. It's against the rules to refer—

Mr Elston: That's right. Somebody just said it was against—he indicated he was coming back when he left; I'm only identifying what he identified. The member from Algoma is interrupting and he rightfully is interrupting me. I apologize for bringing attention to the fact that Mr Charlton is not here,

but he is coming back. He told me that, but I wish he were here to hear the full story. I sat and I listened to him make his presentation. I listened to the lecture; and I'm quite prepared to do that if he is prepared to listen as well.

But let me come back to a couple of other things. Let

me come back to the House schedule. The orders of the day do not contemplate us moving today to this time allocation motion. It was a sneaky attack. It was an indication that there were several people that the government House leader didn't want to have here. He was hoping, for instance, my friend from Dufferin-Peel and my friend from Willowdale would be gone someplace so that they would not have their say, because they have covered almost the entire proceeding. The member from Willowdale has just a passing interest in this whole affair, but has been none the less attendant at almost every public performance of the public review of this case. I am pleased in fact that he's able, on short notice, to show up here.

But the same is not to be said for some of my colleagues who were in the committee. They had other obligations that take them away from this place and on the spur of the moment cannot be called back here. It was a trick. It was the way in which the New Democrats are now manipulating the democratic forum. They trick people. They put them out someplace and then they call business which was not scheduled or even considered for calling.

Probably if I were to be looking at this very carefully, they may not have been too concerned about the disadvantage at which they would be placing the opposition politicians. Although I'm sure we're held in quite high esteem by the members of the New Democratic Party, they probably don't care to listen to our speech. They're probably not all that concerned about us. They might in fact take leave of the House and never return when we're speaking. That's a possibility.

But the thing that these people more than anything else are concerned about, they are concerned about the fact that Peter Kormos might very well have been here, had he seen the orders of the day which said today, June 8, would be the day we debate the time allocation motion for Bill 164.

Guess what, Mr Speaker. These people—Brian Charlton, the government House leader, Bob Rae and the rest of those behind-the-scenes-type people have played a trick on the member from Welland-Thorold. They have been sure that the member from Welland-Thorold would not be here to intervene.

You see, although he is disciplined in many others, on this issue the member from Welland-Thorold has been completely consistent. He has been completely against. He has not supported the government and would not—in fact while he took a strip off me for closing down debate after his 17-hour dissertation, including a whole series of readings of phone messages, if the member from Algoma can recall. In fact he came in for some of those, not all of them. I was here for about 90% of them, even some of the phone messages from my own riding. It was very intriguing.

But Peter Kormos, the member from Welland-Thorold,

has been completely consistent, and he would have stood in this House, had he known the business that was being transacted today, and spoken against it. That's why this motion is on today: because the member from Hamilton Mountain has determined that he is away.

Mr Harnick: I remember when Bob Rae used to have to rush in and have his picture taken with Peter Kormos for auto insurance.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): The member for Bruce has the floor.

Mr Elston: As I said, the government House leader has determined that the member for Welland-Thorold would be away today and would not be able to participate in this debate.

While they want to disadvantage us as members of the opposition and complain about how we hold this thing up, although the story on the record is clear about the number of amendments taking place in this most recent edition of committee hearings, he accuses us of delay. I accuse him of trying to make sure that the member from Welland-Thorold is not allowed to speak on this matter because he knows how embarrassing it would be for the government in that regard.

It's quite interesting. You know, there is a longer history to time allocation motions on Bill 164 than the government House leader would let any of us believe by his remarks. You would think that he had been the most--what will we say?--the most patient, the most sort of tortured man as he tried to let the democratic process take its way.

Well, Mr Speaker, can I tell you something that the member from Hamilton Mountain didn't offer by way of explanation about Bill 164? His predecessor, Mr Cooke, as he is referred to in the final status of business report—he's also the member from Windsor-Riverside—had introduced a resolution way back in the last session that talked about time allocation for Bill 164. Isn't that surprising?

You know something? The member from Hamilton Mountain really forgot that what they did was they introduced all of these resolutions for time allocation, and in fact Mr Cooke held this over the heads of individuals in the House leaders' meetings, meeting after meeting, forcing us to close down our debate on second reading so we could get into committee, and a deal was struck to do something in committee.

It was held over our heads, not as a bargaining chip but as the final solution offered by the member from Windsor-Riverside in his then position as government House leader, and the member from Hamilton Mountain now stands in his place today during his presentation saying how patient they were. Well, they got their way by hanging this thing over our heads last session. They used it. They used it and they extracted from us a compromise that got us into committee.

The people of the province of Ontario looking at the proceedings will know that the history of Bill 164 and its usefulness as a tool have been much different than the member from Hamilton Mountain would allow to the public today. I am surprised that the member from Hamilton Mountain, if he was giving a full presentation of the historical narrative that surrounds Bill 164, wouldn't have told us about this and its negotiating chip type of strategy.

I'm surprised that he didn't tell us about the number of changes that have been made to his bill, not only by himself but by members of the opposition party, and helpful suggestions they were, according to his colleagues who staff the committees. "Oh, there's nothing substantive," he says. Perhaps there isn't, but they are all changes that will make it easier to implement the bill, so said by his parliamentary assistant and by others, but he denies that the committee process is working as it ought. He denies that this is not the first government time allocation motion that was brought to deal with Bill 164 and to force and push the debate quicker and extract promises of a restrained debate on this issue. He has forgotten. Either that or there is something in the way in which he presents the case that has him fearful of telling us about all of the details.

This is not the same Bill 164 that we saw before, because there have been at least a couple of major changes, substantial changes, to the companion regulations which this minister brought forward when he originally introduced the bill. In fairness, he need not have brought the regulations out at all, except that to understand his legislation you really do have to have the companion piece, the regulations, along with them to accompany the discussion.

I did the same when I brought in Bill 68. In fact, if you remember correctly, the member from Welland-Thorold, on all occasions, Mr Government House Leader, was advised, because he was the critic then for the opposition New Democrats, when the business of the House brought us to deal with Bill 68, and I can remember the speeches that were made by Mr Kormos day after day as he not only said things about the bill itself but about the regulations.

But if we'd gotten the full story from the government House leader, he would have told us about the number of changes, about the negotiations which were changing the nature of Bill 164 even as the people received deputations from the public; even as the clause-by-clause was begun; even as the clause-by-clause began again after the opening of the new Parliament. And he talks about our delay—a most unfair accusation when you consider the nature of the changes that are being contemplated and in fact are being done, probably even as we speak.

Now, he spoke for some time about the rehabilitation task force, and I think that was a very successful undertaking, but it is not the bill. The rehab and other schedules

can be done under the regulations, and while I commend him for going into that type of consultation, it is the same type of consultation that the Tories did when they first brought schedule C in; it's the same type of consultation I did with other parts of schedule C, the no-fault benefits, when I was there.

1640

There was nothing unusual, except perhaps that it is more precisely connected with rehab and long-term care services. I acknowledge it. I acknowledge that was a good task force. I acknowledge that was successful. A number of the people who were in it felt it was working. But believe me, it's hardly novel and it is not the type of consultation which will lead to a better presentation of the issues around the public consideration of Bill 164, the actual legislative framework for those regulations.

It's a wonderful adjunct, it's a wonderful helper, but it doesn't talk about the threshold. It doesn't talk about the nature of the removal of the right to sue for economic loss. I know that is probably one of the more devastating parts of this bill, as it concerns the member from Willowdale, though I'm sure he will speak for himself and can do quite well.

For me, it is outrageous that he contends we have delayed, when this bill changes shape and style day after day, when we have to stand down full sections of the bill being debated in the committee till his people can come back with a reply to the members who have asked honest and detailed questions, just to repeat because you were away briefly.

The member from Willowdale wanted to know what the result of the Court of Appeal challenge on OMPP will be, because there could be a substantial change in threshold. No answer, although the parliamentary assistant was diligent in trying to seek that out.

What would be the end of the discussions, because I was aware of them, as were others, between the minister and his people and the insurance industry with respect to, perhaps, changes in wording on the threshold? That was something that was not given to us. It seemed that it was hardly worthwhile proceeding to do the bill if hours from the time that we dealt with sections, the minister was coming back with amendments.

Well, we got tons of amendments. We got tons of amendments because those people determined, after they'd gotten through the draft, and then heard depositions and heard other people's presentations, that they needed to make changes. Some of them were actually negotiated with the insurance industry to try to clear up wording which was badly fashioned and in fact would disadvantage a number of the people who would take benefits under insurance coverages as a result of auto accidents.

There was no acknowledgement that in fact those changes were developed as a result of the extended hearing process. The member from Hamilton Mountain

seems only to want the people to believe that there was nothing useful in the committee deliberations, and that is not correct. It is correct that the committee hearings and the depositions that came before the committee found real flaws with this bill. They found flaws in addition to the concerns about whether or not the member was actually going in the right direction at all.

There are some people who will probably always disagree with the choices he makes, but as a member of the executive council, he is charged with making those decisions, and I have no question about his right to make those. He can be wrong; that's his right. But why is it that when he takes a decision, he believes there is nobody else who can raise in this public forum a concern about what we believe to be grievous errors in public policy?

Let me ask a simple question. If we cannot raise concerns about what we believe to be bad public policy, in the people's chamber, by way of complaint or identification, by way of argument, by way of interrogatory, then what in the world is this chamber for? This chamber is not to be used as a rubber stamp for the executive council's priorities. This place is to be used to address the concerns of our constituents to the executive council. It is a different type of government where the executive council governs by fiat and requires the people's representatives to come and rubber-stamp their deeds.

Hon Mr Charlton: What about the amendments you allowed in 68?

Mr Elston: The member from Hamilton Mountain, who is wanting to know about the amendments to Bill 68, will probably know that there weren't too many amendments allowed because mostly we were listening to Mr Kormos, the member from Welland-Thorold, reading a whole series of telephone messages for well over 17 hours in this particular place. In fact, he will go down, as a result of the rule changes, as the longest-speaking member on one subject without result.

There is no question that Bill 68, about which the member wants to remind me, will probably be determined to have some flaws in it. In fact, that is the case, because whatever we as humans manufacture to try and deal with problems, we will soon discover that either problems have outstripped the nature of the wording or we have neglected something that was possible to deliver. Sometimes that's clear.

The issue of indexation of benefits was an issue we had to wrestle with. The question of affordability and the ability of people to deliver a service over the long term with respect to that issue was something we made a decision upon. He can say we're wrong and that's okay. I have to stand by my decisions. But we listened day after day to the member for Welland-Thorold telling us about those mistakes. We listened day after day to the member for Leeds-Grenville telling us about those mistakes.

Mr Speaker, you know what really makes me a little bit

angry in listening to the member for Hamilton Mountain lecture us about the number of minutes on third reading? He didn't tell the people of this province how long was consumed in second reading debates and in committee work. He neglects that. Do you know why, Mr Speaker? Because before the passage of these really draconian speaking rules, a member could go on for as long as he or she wanted to speak. In fact, Peter Kormos's 17-hour marathon stands as testament to the fact that once a member started to put his or her case, he or she could put the case until he or she was exhausted or until there was a motion to do something else by the government.

Well, 17 hours in my last reading of my mathematics book is much more extensive than a 30-minute time line that any of the members now has. We listened as the member for Welland-Thorold, who was standing here on this side of the House in his opposition days, put his case day after day. We had to agree to disagree, basically. I don't think we ever even agreed to disagree; it was just something we could not deliver at that time.

While the member for Hamilton Mountain is here, I'd like to tell him that while he complains about the problems of the amendments not taking place quickly enough from his point of view, he should be reminded that all he has to do is amend the regulations. I said that once before; I repeat it now only because I think it should be freshly said in his presence.

When I was the minister and in charge of the auto insurance thing, on May 9, 1990, this is what I said about the bill and I quote: "People will disagree with the initiatives of government, people will disagree with the interjections from the official opposition, people will disagree with the member for Sarnia who, as interim leader, has so well led his party. That is the nature of our business." The member for Sarnia was not the Mr Huget who is in the House today, but one Mr Andy Brandt who was then leading the Conservative opposition.

We have to acknowledge that we are not all able to be agreeable to all issues. But we also likewise have to agree that the people's chamber is where we bring those disagreements for an airing. What do we have today? We have with a degree of finality the answer of the government House leader to any disagreement: that is to finish up in committee in one day; after that to come back to the House, although the rules allow us to go into committee of the whole, the rules allow us to debate the report of the committee to this chamber and allow us a debate on third reading.

The member for Hamilton Mountain, the great democrat—the great democrats who form the government party—has said there will be no report of the committee to be debated, there will be no committee of the whole in this Legislative Assembly and there will be no extensive third reading debate. There will be, in fact, only two hours of debate.

What the member for Hamilton Mountain didn't tell us

is that in previous parliaments at previous times the debates were held on second reading extensively, that debates were held in committee extensively and that only on closure—which was rarely used even by those nasty people, the Tories, when I first came down here, and they had some tough stuff to do—we did not find that we were shut down in committee very quickly. There is no question that with the recent realization about freedom of debate in the new Progressive Conservative Party caucus, they would probably cry large tears of concern if they read those Hansards from 1981 and 1982.

1650

Mr Harnick: You were just a kid then, and we weren't born.

Mr Elston: The member from Willowdale has indicated that in 1981, he wasn't even born. I suspect that he's probably exaggerating just for the sake of exaggeration and trying to get my attention.

If people think that they have to bring into the Legislative Assembly, on items like Bill 164, time allocation and closure, basically the end of the public debate, because they think it's a serious issue—and it is serious in some ways—they should look back in Hansard to examine the issues which were confronting the Progressive Conservatives and other administrations, the Liberal administration, to see exactly how much time did pass before time allocation was dealt with.

If we could just go back to one item which is paralleling today's activities, for instance, the New Democrats in 1981 and 1982 in this Legislative Assembly were confronted with the prospect of voting for two wage control bills authored then by the administration under the leadership of William Grenville Davis, the Premier of the province, the member from Brampton. The members will know that Bill 179 and Bill 111 were not really happily received by the New Democrats and others of us, and we went on and on and on and on.

So we should look at the history of the development of the discussions on those issues and the amount of activity that was undertaken by the New Democratic Party of the early 1980s to ensure that every person could be heard.

Now we are left with a mere shadow of the democratic party that these people used to belong to. They will give individuals a mere seven or eight minutes in front of committee to put their position. They will give groups 15 minutes and half an hour in front of the committee to put their position on very important public policy undertakings by the government, not just Bill 164 but on others as well.

The labour bill is a case in point. It is one that has caused a great debate in this place, and there will be others. Tax issues will cause us great concern, but we are limited in what we can do. These people, the New Democratic Party, have brought that into this Legislative Assembly.

I make one more point about the nature of the people's House. I represent one of 130 seats, and it is from time to time my need as an individual member to stand in this place and bring my constituents' interests to the fore.

Today, I was allowed a question in this place of the Minister of Natural Resources and I raised the issue of the \$113,000 problem that confronts the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority and the \$250,000 problem that confronts the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority because of the public policy decision taken by the executive council of the province of Ontario to end the conservation land tax rebate program. It looks like there will be no option for those people except to not pay their taxes or to make a special levy on the property taxes of the areas in which those two conservation authorities exist if they are to pay the tax for which they regularly had received to this point a rebate.

It is my role, as a result, to bring that to the attention of the executive council, and I did it in this forum, which is what the standing orders allow me to do. I hope that it was of some important effect.

I hope they will see that there is a real danger in losing the public-trusted lands which have been accumulated under various conservation authorities, not only in the Bruce area but in all of the areas of the province of Ontario. Those public lands are an important trust for people so that they can go there and examine the types of initiatives that we have been taking as a generation to ensure that our children and their children and their children will be privileged enough to visit some of the most beautiful and most important lands that Ontario has today to offer, and that is my right as a member. It says so in the standing orders. I can raise that as a local issue.

I can raise the issue of the Bruce A generating station and the problem which confronts the men and women in my area who must deal with the prospect of loss of employment, in fact the loss of that facility.

That's what the people's chamber is for, so that I can stand up and say, "Prime minister, Finance minister, government House leader, your public policy decisions are wrecking the Bruce constituency," or, as I did today, "Mr Minister of Natural Resources, take to heart the advice given by the conservation authorities' association representatives and consider a new way of delivering public services to the province so you can get on with good public administration. That's what this House is for, so that I can voice my concerns on behalf of my constituents.

Today, the concerns that I have with respect to Bill 164 cannot and will not be presented to the government on third reading because I will have but two hours, among some 130 others who may wish to speak. I acknowledge that probably that should be 129—actually, 128: One member has resigned recently, as you know, so his seat is vacant, and the Speaker does not participate in debate, so he will not partake of this debate either. But the rest of

us, 128 others, will have to share some two hours on third reading if we decide that the letters that are addressed to us—I'm just getting a letter from home. Oh. It says something that would be contrary, I'm sure, to the advice of the government House leader, but it says, "Good speech." I'm taking this home and having it framed and putting it on the wall. It's the first time I've received one of these in ages.

But let me tell you that the real problem for me is that for two hours on third reading, after we finally come up with a final form for this bill as it hits us, we will only have two hours to put the case for the public.

I understand that there has been a lot of consultation. There's no question that in administrations, you talk to people as long as you can and then you have to come up with a decision. The Conservative government did it, the Liberal government did it, and the New Democratic Party government is doing it. You talk until you get a consensus, or if you can't find a consensus, because on some issues there is none, you make your decision and you move with it. I did under 68.

But having done it doesn't give you the right to shut everybody else down because you're fed up with hearing the public's disenchantment with your public policy position. That's not what the people's chamber is about. The people's chamber is about presenting public dissent on an issue of public importance. Sometimes we help with legislative schemes. I made a speech here about some of the things that happened under the cooperative act that we did in the last Parliament, because we exhibited a certain degree of cooperation as we sped that bill through the House because there was a series of issues which were raised at various stages of debate and the minister reacted by changing some things and helping all of us feel much better about that bill.

That could happen in these cases, although I suspect—in fact, I think it's quite fair to say that there is a real disagreement about the issue of threshold and some other initiatives under Bill 164. Those things may never come to an agreement.

But it is not right that the dissent of the opposition is quieted. It is not right that the dissent of the members opposite who serve in the government party is quieted. It is not right that the business of the day is ordered differently than public notice was given so that the member from Welland-Thorold and others in the government caucus would be away when this was sprung on the unsuspecting people's Parliament.

There are a lot of things I could say more about the way this has developed. I had some interesting quotes. Actually, I'm going to read a couple of quotes which I think you will find are quite interesting. There's one from Bob Rae which, as I went through this material, I found quite striking. It was actually Bob Rae talking about the Liberals. Here it is, Bob Rae, December 5, 1989, in Hansard: "I can tell you what Bob Rae would say when

the insurance companies come into the Premier's office and they say, 'If you don't do what we want, we're going to get out of Ontario.' I would say: 'Good riddance to you, my friends. Goodbye. We'll run the plan ourselves.'" That is the truth, the simple truth.

1700

Mr Harnick: Who said that?

Mr Elston: That was Bob Rae as he then was, on December 5, 1989.

Now, it's interesting that after the change that occurred at Honey Harbour, I sort of got this glazed look in the eyes of the New Democratic Party members who either have forgotten about Honey Harbour or have, because of the result of that, suffered needless problems.

But here is what my friend Peter Kormos said about Bob Rae and the insurance lobbyists: "Their (insurance industry) lobbyists and consultants had a direct pipeline in some respects, on some issues, into the Premier's office."

When Mr Kormos was asked whether Mr Rae would achieve lower premiums, enhanced benefits and fairness without a takeover, Mr Kormos replied: "That's flat and simple horseblank."

Peter Kormos doesn't believe anything that the Premier says about this stuff. He probably doesn't even believe anything that the member from Hamilton Mountain has said about this particular bill. I've heard his speeches. In fact, it's too bad we couldn't resurrect them now and put them on the floor so they could form part of the record of this debate. It, unfortunately, can't be done. The rules don't allow it, but it would make interesting reading in the context of all of the other discussions that were going on. Peter Kormos doesn't think we've had enough debate. He thinks this bill is outrageous and he'll probably vote against it.

But I can tell you one thing: I'm against the time allocation motion. We have not had a stable piece of legislation for us to consider in the time that it has been introduced to this Legislative Assembly. It has changed. Deals have been struck quietly behind closed doors. Deputants to the committee—before some people leave the chamber and go home without hearing the full debate—have set up some of the problems that exist as a result of the way this is worded. We have made some improvements to a bill which we don't believe is good at all in its initial development, but we are willing to work in the committee to deal with the details. We're still willing to do that, and it's still not too late for the government House leader to withdraw. It is still not too late.

You see, there are other pieces of legislation which are coming. I mentioned before about Bill 179 and Bill 111 from a previous Parliament, authored by the then Premier, W.G. Davis, and today we are confronted by something of parallel nature: the social contract. The problem the Premier is having in dealing with the finances of this province has yet to be dealt with. Perhaps there is a

reasonable compromise we can come to with respect to dealing with all of the business of this particular place, particularly if we ever know what they want to have done and accomplished.

If the Minister of Financial Institutions, as he then was, the minister now responsible for auto insurance, the member from Hamilton Mountain, would have told us what he wanted to accomplish without doing all this dithering and diddling around and making changes willy-nilly here and there as we try to deal with the bill, perhaps this would have been done. If he had listened to some of the sage advice from—dare I say this?—some of the Tories, who I find to have some reasonable positions once in a while, and from my colleagues, the Liberals, and even from some of his own people, this thing might have been done some time ago. If he had taken some steps to change the regulations, which he could do without even coming in this place, perhaps he wouldn't be in such a dither about doing the time allocation motion.

Mr Harnick: Murray, all he had to do was change a comma to "or."

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Elston: Mr Speaker, I'm having some help here, and actually I'm going to give the floor over to my friends in the third party very shortly.

But this is not the way government business is done. If he wants to close us down, he should just say, "I'm fed up with you birds and we're going to do it." But he tries to create some story about us delaying this thing, about not providing some value added to his legislation, concocting some idea of how he has made no changes at any time to this bill as we deliberated on it in committee, trying to play somehow the aggrieved innocent in all of this when he and his party have manipulated the historical carryings-on of this bill over the course of these past several months.

I'm against the time allocation motion. I'm against the way that this Parliament has developed under the New Democratic Party. I am against the way that they shut down people. It used to be that they just time-allocated us out of existence altogether and they did it face on. But now, to take care of their own dissidents in their own caucus—namely, the member from Welland-Thorold—they do it by giving us an order paper which is deceptive on what is actually going to be done.

The order paper doesn't talk about this happening today. If it had, and that had been shipped over to the member from Welland-Thorold, he would have been in his place and he and I would have found ourselves, interestingly enough, on the same side of an issue—and we certainly had our days, when I was doing Bill 68. But today, he and I would have joined forces to condemn the loss of democracy in the people's place, to condemn the decision of the government to quit listening to the people who have a problem with their public policy. He would

condemn the fact that his own colleagues, whom he knows, are not allowed to speak. He'd be here and he'd be saying it if there had been an accurate orders of the day paper for us to read.

I condemn the government House leader for the way in which he has put the story forth today, because it is not accurate. I condemn the member from Hamilton Mountain for the way in which he has sprung this motion on all of us so that the people with the historical background would not be present. I condemn the member from Hamilton Mountain for not telling the people the things that he could have done, had he wished, to make changes to the schedule of benefits. I condemn him for not telling the people of this province that, had he made his decisions in a more timely fashion, we could have done our business. And I condemn him for not acknowledging in this House that the real problem is that he wants public insurance but Bob Rae doesn't, and he is determined to wreak havoc in whatever way he can and have his way so that his personal agenda can overcome that of the Premier. Their differences are their problem.

I don't agree with public insurance. I would agree with those people who support the delivery of this public service by the private sector. I agree with that. Lots of New Democrats support the idea of public auto insurance, and I admire them for that position because they hold it because of certain beliefs. That's their situation. But it is not within the mandate of the member from Hamilton Mountain to take out his frustration with his Premier by shutting off those people who don't agree with him. But that's what this has become. It has become very personal. It has become a public badge for him to say that he did it with respect to auto insurance. "I don't care what I'm doing. I don't care how it affects anybody. I want this thing not to work. I want this thing to be in a position where I can deliver on my promise to bring public auto insurance."

He is trying to destabilize help which is needed for people who suffer accident injuries. That's a problem for me. How in the world can you do that just so that you can have a one-upmanship battle won with the Premier? How can you play that game? I condemn him for that, because other things could be done. Other steps could be taken.

1710

I must give way, and I apologize for taking so much time. I feel extremely strongly about this. I feel extremely strongly about putting the full case for people to deliberate upon. I'm sure that my friends from the third party will have something to say, and if they're gentle I will probably support them in most of it, but perhaps not all. But I tell you that this is the wrong thing today. It will create a new atmosphere in this House and it will, because the orders of the day no longer accurately reflect what this government intends to do day by day, set a new low for the nature of cooperation in the legislative agenda.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further debate?

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I wish to make a few comments on this motion which essentially is shutting down the debate on auto insurance. I will say that this place is becoming stranger and stranger and stranger as our time in this place goes on.

I look at rule 53, which talks about the method of giving notice as to what's to go on the following day. Indeed, today I think we were all prepared to discuss a number of matters. We were prepared to discuss, as was printed in the orders of the day, motion number 4, which is a resolution which talks about meeting from 6 o'clock to 12 o'clock on the days from June 15 to 24. Then we were to talk, after that, on Sunday shopping.

Every organization that I know of in this province has an agenda. This is our agenda: the orders of the day. In doing that, we're able to determine what sort of business we're going to conduct. I'll tell you, it's a very strange operation. We all have other obligations to do at the end of the introduction of bills and the routine proceedings. We have to go to committees. We have to meet with constituents. We have to meet with members of our caucus to discuss areas of legislation that are before this place.

That's exactly what we did, because we knew that today there was one motion and one bill that were going to be dealt with, one bill dealing with the Sunday shopping legislation, and who knows how old that is. But that's what we were to do today. I went to a subcommittee meeting, having duly been called to attend a subcommittee meeting to discuss a number of items on that committee. I watched on television, just by chance—and it was literally by chance—the House leader stand up and announce that today we're going to talk on shutting down Bill 164.

I will say that is the most sneaky thing I have seen this government do ever. It's a bill that has not been supported by anyone. It hasn't been supported by members of their party. It hasn't been supported by interest groups. It hasn't been supported by one delegation, not one delegation, that came before the hearings of this bill. This government has decided to ram this thing forward.

I'd like to take us back. Remember the promises of this government? Remember this funny thing, *An Agenda for People*, in which almost every item that comes forward, every commitment that's been made by this government, has been broken? One of the topics that was put forward was the topic of driver-owned insurance, public auto insurance, in which case the then New Democratic Party made it quite clear, when it was running for office, that it was going to support public auto insurance. They were opposed to Bill 68, which was the legislation that Mr Kormos, the member from Welland-Thorold, made his record speech on in this place opposing auto insurance, as did many of this colleagues in this place.

Then they got elected. The big fluke of the century occurred: This government got elected. They continued to announce that they were going to support public auto insurance, government-run auto insurance. Then they had a meeting at Honey Harbour, notwithstanding of course that the House leader and the member responsible for auto insurance supported a bill that was put forward by the member for Leeds-Grenville of our party to return to the tort system. That was done literally months before Bill 164 was introduced, which was on December 5, 1991. On December 1, 1991, Bill 164 was introduced. That's a long time ago.

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): What is the date?

Mr Tilson: Yes, what is the date today? You're quite right. We have discovered, through all the debates that went on in this place and in committee, that this government hasn't the slightest idea as to what it's doing with respect to auto insurance, hasn't the slightest idea. It gives us all great concern.

We have spent a considerable amount of time in committee, and it has been suggested by the House leader that we are filibustering, that the members in the opposition are filibustering. I can tell you that's not true. I can tell you that legitimate questions were put forward by opposition members of the committee which the parliamentary assistant, members of the committee and the staff for the ministry responsible for auto insurance weren't able to answer, so those questions were stood down.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Sarnia.

Mr Tilson: I'll tell you what questions were stood down. A number of questions were stood down and they remain down. The amendments have not been debated. We've spent hardly any time on any of the amendments, and those amendments that have come forward have been withdrawn. They haven't been withdrawn; they've been stood down.

This government has a lot to do, a lot of work to do in explaining to the people of this province where it's going with respect to auto insurance. I must confess, I believe it's all a grand plan, although, privately speaking to the member from Welland-Thorold, he says: "This government doesn't have a plan. There's no plan."

I can tell you what has happened with the auto insurance industry. They know that auto insurance premiums are going to go up, from their calculations, anywhere between 20% and 30%. That's not calculating the estimates that have been put forward by the Treasurer of this province with respect to taxing on auto insurance. It doesn't include that at all.

The minister responsible for auto insurance and the House leader of his party has said: "They'll be no increases in auto insurance. In exchange for that we're going to take away your right to sue for economic loss.

You're no longer going to be able to claim for future loss of earnings." That fact is the most draconian, the most evil of all the provisions in this bill. You're simply taking away their rights to sue, those rights.

It's as if we're all the same. We're not all the same. My arm is different from your arm and his arm and her arm. We're all different. That's the problem, that when you have these injuries we're being treated as if—it's a meat chart.

The big question I have is, will the insurance industry be able to absorb the increased costs of Bill 164? They have said they will not, notwithstanding the fact that the minister has said that rates will not go up. Already rates have gone up because the Treasurer, last year, reinstituted the premium tax of 3%. He has just entered the House. I'd love to hear his thoughts on this. He has reinstituted the 3% premium tax—this was last year—on auto insurance premiums. This year we're going to tax auto insurance premiums by 5%, and that's a tax on a tax.

We're also going to tax warranties, another tax on a tax, with respect to the fact that most of the premiums that are paid in this province are paid with respect to the repairs of motor vehicles. So it's a tax on a tax on a tax on a tax. That's the budget. That has nothing to do with the estimates that are being put forward with the government's own figures that premiums are going to increase at least 4.5%. Listening to the calculations of the insurance companies, they're going to increase as much as 20% to 30%, depending on which set of calculations you use.

The fact of the matter is that there are now three decisions that are before the Court of Appeal which have been reserved and which will probably be heard some time later on this summer, three decisions which are interpreting the threshold test of Bill 168. It may well be that the courts will interpret that threshold test that will satisfy the interests of this government.

However, this bill is going to be rammed through. It will be rammed through before those decisions have been made. I have submitted in committee that would it not be more appropriate to wait until those decisions have been heard, because it may well be that the threshold test—

Mr Huget: You are stalling.

Mr Tilson: You're saying the courts are stalling? Come on, give me a break. The fact of the matter is that is one reason why this legislation should be delayed.

1720

The second reason is that the whole principle of this legislation is based on regulations, the principle of regulations, because it's benefit packages. So after the bill was introduced some time in the early part of 1991—in fact, I think the regulations were introduced after the second reading of this bill. I've misplaced when that was, but the fact of the matter is that it was after the debate on second reading of Bill 164. That's when the regulations

were brought in to be introduced. The draft regulations were to be made available for members of the committee and members of the public.

Then we went around the province, and in Toronto, and we debated, we listened, we consulted with the doctors, the lawyers, all those people, the injured people, all those people who have been involved in auto insurance since day one, since back in the days of Bill 68. We listened to those people and every last one of them, in order to understand the principles of auto insurance, had to comprehend the regulations. Every last one of them said: "We don't understand them. We can't make head or tail of them." Very, very qualified people came to the committee and said, "We don't understand them."

It was then announced that those regulations would be withdrawn and that a committee would be set up in which a new set of regulations would be put forward. We have yet to see those regulations, and yet we're going to ram this bill through without looking at the document that is needed to properly understand the philosophy of this government in no-fault auto insurance.

The third reason why this legislation should be delayed is that there's no one who represents the innocent accident victim. That submission was made in this House; that submission was made in committee.

I can't remember whether it was the parliamentary assistant or the minister responsible for auto insurance, to give him credit, who retained Professor Arthurs. Professor Arthurs is going to go away and he's going to come back, presumably in the fall, and tell us about a brand-new advocacy system of people and individuals who are going to be trained to look after the innocent accident victims on such matters as appearing before the Ontario Insurance Commission. We have no idea who those advocates are going to be. We have no idea how they're going to be paid. We have no idea what their qualifications are. We have no idea whether they'll be able to properly assist the innocent accident victims in dealing with the very experienced insurance companies.

All we know is that those are three very, very sound reasons why this legislation should not proceed at this time. It's a very strange process as to why this government is determined to proceed with this legislation when all these things had to be done.

The minister did make some comments that he had some discussions with myself and the member from Willowdale during the hearings, and he did. One of the issues he raised was that he had some concerns and some thoughts that perhaps we should return to a verbal threshold test; in other words, the deductible test of \$15,000 may not be appropriate. He indicated that this would be a consideration. This was in the middle of the public hearings. I think it's fair for the minister to come and explain himself as to why he said that. If he honestly believes that the \$15,000 deductible test isn't appropriate and that we should return to some sort of verbal threshold

test, that should be done. We should at least go back and review that in the committee, but he's cutting off debate in the committee. We will not be able to get a chance to do that.

One of the indications I made is that I am convinced that the insurance industry will not be able to financially handle this whole package that's being put forward by this government in the benefit package, which we have yet to see because the regulations have yet to be written. We don't even know what that package is, but we're very suspicious, having looked at the first set of regulations, that the insurance industry simply won't be able to properly finance it, having heard the minister promise that insurance rates will not go up, and yet, of course, if they try to get out of the auto insurance business, they're going to be penalized; they're going to be fined.

Who is going to come and invest in auto insurance in this country with this new law? How are they going to leave? Because if they leave, they're going to be fined; they're going to be penalized. What a strange place this has become, not only in this whole process but in the strange system of law.

I will say I received an interesting letter from a constituent of mine in my riding of Dufferin-Peel. The letter really was addressing issues that were raised in the budget, but I believe that the whole scheme of this government is to make it more and more difficult for the insurance industry to operate auto insurance in this province, and I believe that their plan, that they apparently have broken, of having public auto insurance, is still there on the stove and the element is on. I believe that the insurance industry, because of their strange regulations and their requirements for costs, simply won't be able to produce the plan that is being put forward by this government under Bill 164.

Already, for example, I've received a letter from a general insurance agency that hires 12 employees in the town of Orangeville. I'm not going to read the letter in detail, but I will list off some of the things that they're being put forward to, and this is not counting the minimum 4.5% increase that is going to come out of Bill 164, or the 20% to 30% required by the auto insurance companies. This is just on taxes.

There's an income that the insurance agency has to pay. There's an income tax for employees. There's the health tax. There's the pension plan for the employees and the employers. There's the Unemployment Insurance Commission deduction. There's the property tax. There's the GST, and now we're going to have PST on premiums.

I have now received another letter. This letter was addressed to me at the end of May after the introduction of the Treasurer's budget, and now I've received another letter today which simply says they're going out of business. They're going to sell their business. I don't know what's going to happen to those 12 employees, and I suspect that you're going to hear stories such as that

across this province, or the auto insurance industry is going to go down the tubes and the government's going to say, "You people can't operate it; we will," and we're going to have government-run auto insurance— notwithstanding, of course, the Treasurer and the Premier of this province standing up and saying: "We've got to cut back on bureaucracy in this province. We've got to cut back \$2 billion. We can't continue the way we're doing. We're going to have to cut back." Notwithstanding that, that I believe is the plan of this government.

I would like very briefly to talk about some of the things that have yet to be discussed in this committee. The operation of the insurance commission is one. We did not receive any depositions from the Ontario Insurance Commission. Not one came to this committee. We received facts that this government did not consult with the Ontario Insurance Commission as to the operation of the benefits packages that are being suggested by Bill 164.

They didn't even discuss it with them, although the chairman of the Ontario Insurance Commission said that at the very minimum, he is going to require 100 more people to operate with the tremendous influx of claims that are going to go before the Ontario Insurance Commission to determine the rights of the innocent accident victims who will now be unrepresented before the Ontario Insurance Commission.

That whole issue of cost, that's another bureaucracy that I don't believe has ever been discussed or any estimates ever put forward by the government as to what it's going to cost to operate Bill 164 before the Ontario Insurance Commission.

1730

The insurance companies are going to have a great deal of difficulties. They're going to have to retain a great deal of legal assistance because people are going to come forward asking for certain benefits and the insurance company will say, "No, you're not entitled to that benefit; you're entitled to another benefit."

And what are the innocent accident victims going to do? What are they going to do? There they are, confronted. They're standing before the Ontario Insurance Commission, opposing a lawyer from the insurance companies, and they're unrepresented. What are they going to do? Maybe Professor Arthurs will come up with something, but we have no idea at this particular point in time.

We have no idea of the cost it's going to take to the insurance companies, the innocent accident victims. Who's going to compensate? What if the innocent accident victim is correct and goes to a great deal of expense in retaining legal assistance to argue their case before the Ontario Insurance Commission? Who's going to compensate them? That whole area has yet to be canvassed.

The whole issue of qualifications of those people, as I

indicated earlier, the qualifications of the advocates: We don't know anything about that, that's being proposed, because obviously this government has made comments that it doesn't want the lawyers to assist the innocent accident victims. They're going to provide a whole new legal system called the advocacy system.

I asked a question on an order paper question. I referred to some of that at the committee and I'd like to refer to it again here at this particular time, because these questions are unanswered. There's no reason why these committee hearings must stop and there's no reason why we can't have a fuller debate in this House, because there's so much that remains unanswered. Every day in the committee we ask questions and sections are stood down because the staff simply don't have the answers; they need to research it. Or they'll say, "You'll find that answer in the regulations," yet the regulations have yet to be written. We don't even know what those regulations are. That's the answer to our questions: "It'll be in the regulations. Trust us."

My question to the ministry, which was signed by the Treasurer, was, "Would the Chair of the Management Board and minister responsible for auto insurance please indicate who acts as an advocate for innocent accident victims before the Ontario Insurance Commission."

At this particular point in time, the Treasurer said, and I just received this last week, "There is no advocate for the insured at the Ontario Insurance Commission (OIC) similar to the position of the worker adviser at the Workers' Compensation Board."

You know who's going to assist those people now? "Friends, family members, paralegals and lawyers" who will "act as advocates." So there's a whole range of people. But all of these people, with the exception of lawyers, have no training. They are not able to interpret Bill 164. They're not able to interpret the regulations of Bill 164. That, when we're starting to think, what are we trying to do with Bill 164?

One of the things we're trying to do is to keep insurance rates down and the other thing we're trying to do is to improve the plight of the innocent accident victim.

I've spoken at length on the first issue. The fact of the matter is that insurance premiums are guaranteed to go up by the combination of this last budget and by Bill 164, as much as 35%, taking all of the hidden insurance premium of last year, the 5% sales tax on insurance premiums of this year and the estimates that are given by the government and the insurance companies as to the increase of costs as a result of the very expensive packages that are being put forward. So on the very first point, they fail as to why they're doing Bill 164.

The second is that with respect to the innocent accident victims, they're not going to be represented. Who's going to look after them? The lawyers have gone. In fact, an interesting comment was made by the Treasurer in answer

to this order paper question. He said: "In 1992, 49% of insureds who used the mediation service were represented by lawyers. Lawyer representation during arbitration and appeals was 71% and 80% respectively."

And this is the next interesting statement: "While representation by lawyers does increase as the negotiation prolongs, it has little bearing on the outcome of the case."

What a sad statement to make as to the plight of the innocent accident victim.

There has been considerable time spent on these topics, the delegations that have come forward to speak. The Progressive Conservative Party has put forward a number of amendments. It doesn't appear that those amendments are going to be dealt with. They're not going to be dealt with; we won't even get a chance to introduce them. We won't even have a chance to make suggestions as to how to improve this bill.

What we're going to do is have a series of amendments that have yet to be debated by the committee rammed through this House without time to debate it. There have been quite a few delegations that have come forward, people asking to speak at the committee from all walks of life, from all different interests and, as I said, not one of them supports Bill 164.

We even had previous members of the New Democratic Party. I'm sorry, I believe he is still a member of the New Democratic Party, but probably very reluctant. A former member of this House, the former member from Welland-Thorold, came to the committee and talked about how his government had broken its promise with respect to public auto insurance. I know, because I hear members of the committee, I hear members of the government side say how they're opposed to Bill 164. They're not even going to be allowed to debate this in the House. They're not even going to be given an opportunity to debate this bill in the House. What a sad state. What a sad state that we, who are elected to come to this place and speak on all kinds of issues, aren't allowed to speak.

I raised a point of privilege the other day with respect to the budget and how I have not been given an opportunity to speak on behalf of my constituents as to the concerns with respect to the budget.

The same applies with respect to Bill 164, that members of this House are not going to be given an opportunity to speak to this bill, particularly after they have heard and read the delegations that have come to the committee and spoken on the many, many aspects and their concerns. These people went to a great deal of time and expense to come to this place. The committee visited a number of places around Ontario and I know what's going through their heads: Why would they bother to come? Why would they bother to come to committees and make presentations? No one listens to them. They make their delegations and then they leave and then this government simply rams through legislation.

It is making the whole system of politics a rather sad state, and I am concerned about the House leader and this government who are giving politicians a very, very bad name. I know you agree with me. I know you agree with me when you sit through the committee process and you hear people make very, very sincere presentations and yet no one listens to them, no one responds to them, people whose lives have been destroyed by automobile accidents. Their lives have been destroyed by Bill 68, the Liberal Bill 68. Both the Progressive Conservative Party and the members of the New Democratic Party spent a great deal of time opposing Bill 68. This government now has the opportunity to do something about it and has in fact made it worse.

I must say, I think we're all going to be very embarrassed going back to our constituents. You're going to be asked questions about auto insurance. You're going to be asked whether you have spoken for or against auto insurance, and the answer is no, you haven't had an opportunity to speak because this government has decided to shut us down.

I would like to spend a little bit more time with respect to the cost of insurance, because that's how it all got going. The fact of the matter is that this government was convinced that by introducing Bill 164, insurance premiums would be reduced. In fact, they said insurance premiums would be reduced. The minister, when he introduced Bill 164, stood in his place and guaranteed that insurance rates would go down. Then as time progressed he said, "No, they'll stay the same."

1740

Then as time went on, he had a study introduced by some people by the name of Mercer, which is an American firm that came up here and advised the government on how to run Ontario auto insurance. They said that premiums were going to go up by 4.4%, 4.5%, in that range, notwithstanding that the insurance companies that deal with this topic guaranteed that rates would go up as low as 20% and as high as 30%.

Mr Speaker and those of you who are watching, with this piece of legislation, you are absolutely guaranteed that your rates are going to go up, and I, as a representative in this place, am not going to be able to properly debate it and offer suggestions of change as to how Bill 164 can be improved. We won't have any of that. We won't be able to study the regulations.

Another strange thing that occurs with respect to legislation in this province as I find it is that the bill is introduced first and then we come along with the regulations, and this is a prime example of the regulations. The regulations can change literally overnight. We're not able to debate those regulations in this place because they're not part of the act. There's a section in the act that says, "The Lieutenant Governor in Council can pass regulations." In other words, if the government makes the decision to change the regulations, it can.

Many jurisdictions in the United States are saying, "Let's look at the regulations first," particularly in bills such as this where the whole philosophy of the bill is based and found in the regulations. They do that. They make sure that they understand what they're doing. They make sure they understand the cost of what they're doing, the cost to the taxpayer, all of the cost. They make sure that they understand how many bureaucrats are going to be required to implement that law. They make sure that they understand how the people will be affected by that law. They do that in all respects, not only with the bill that's being passed, but with respect to the regulations. That's what's done in many jurisdictions in the United States.

It's been suggested in the committee—I have suggested it in the committee—at the very least, let's look at the regulations. Why would we try to ram through a piece of legislation in which almost all of the questions we ask of the particular committee, the answer comes back and says, "Oh well, it'll be in the regulations"? The regulations haven't even been written; they haven't even been printed.

I, for one, want to understand Bill 164. The member from Willowdale wants to understand Bill 164. We have stood in our place in this House, in committee, and asked question after question as to what Bill 164 means. Nobody can understand it. The medical profession has come forward and has indicated to us that they want to be able to be in a position to understand what many of the benefit packages mean. So have the insurance companies. The insurance companies are trying to plan for a way in which they can provide a service to the public, and they don't know, because not only do they not understand the first set of draft regulations; they haven't even seen the next set of regulations.

This whole process is out of order. This whole process as to passing of this law, of ramming this through this place, is completely bewildering to me and, I suspect, if all of you looked at what you're doing over there, to yourselves. You're going to have to go out and explain it to your constituents. You're going to have to go out and explain why you're putting through a bill that you know cannot be properly explained until you've seen all of the bill, and that means the regulations. You cannot explain what this bill means until you have seen the regulations. You cannot, under any circumstances, explain that to your constituents.

You cannot tell your constituents what it's going to cost. The insurance companies, as I say, have given estimates. They said that claims are going to go up by as much as 20% to 30%. Of course, now there'll be another 5% on top of that with respect to the budget.

There is going to be a section, if Bill 164 passes—and it's going to pass; the minister says it's going to pass, the House leader says it's going to pass; he's guaranteeing it's going to pass, without any debate—but we know there's going to be a new system to disallow the use of age and

sex for the setting of rates, which would force female drivers under the age of 25 and older drivers to subsidize the rates of young males.

Statistics have been given that today's rate—for example, men under 21: Their rates are \$2,060, on the average, for premiums. This new rate, this unisex rate, means that the rates are going to be, for men under 21, \$1,709. That's a change downwards for men under 21 of \$351. Well, they should be happy. The men under 21 should be happy.

Men 21 to 24: Today's rate, on the average, not including the new taxes that are being put forward, is \$1,279. With the new rate, the unisex rate that's going to be established by Bill 164, that will be reduced to \$1,114. That's a change of \$165, so they should be happy.

Then there are going to be women under 21. The current rate that they're charged is \$1,144. The unisex rate under Bill 164 is going to be \$1,709. That's an increase to all women under the age of 21 of \$565. That's what Bill 164's going to do, and it's a topic which the committee has not had an opportunity to properly debate and on which people, women under the age of 21, have expressed a concern.

Women 21 to 24: Today's rate is \$957. The new unisex rate under Bill 164 is \$1,144. That's a change upwards of \$187. So all women and senior citizens are going to be penalized by this legislation.

We've not had proper time to deal with that issue. This bill is going to subsidize the rates of young males, and it's going to penalize women drivers under the age of 25 and older drivers, all for the purposes of subsidizing rates of young males.

As well, there's going to be the issue of loss of jobs. I believe that the insurance companies, because they have put the government on notice, are not going to be able to provide the service that they provide now. Why? Because the benefit packages are going to be something that they can't operate without rates going up. The very fact that the minister has said rates aren't going up—although, you know, what's 10%? Because at the very least we know rates are going up by 10%. But that's what the minister says, that rates aren't going up.

How in the world is this benefit package going to be provided by the insurance companies? Where is the money going to come from? Is it going to come from up there, up there, up there? Where's it going to come from? Well, I'll tell you where it's going to come from: The insurance companies are going to have to cut back.

One of the ways they're going to cut back is to cut back in salaries. They're going to have to cut back in jobs. So the insurance industry, as a result of Bill 164, is going to be in deep, deep trouble, and we, as members of the committee and members of this House, have not had and will not have an opportune time to discuss that topic.

The \$15,000-deductible rule, which the minister has

already wavered on and has suggested, "Well, you know, maybe we should have a verbal threshold test of injuries that are serious or permanent": Bill 68 of course says that you can only sue for injuries that are serious and permanent and unless you qualify for that, unless you satisfy that rule, you cannot sue in the courts.

1750

There are now three cases, as I've indicated, before the Ontario Court of Appeal that are going to redefine what this rule means; in other words, what does "serious" mean, what does "and" mean and what does "permanent" mean, all of these words which sound very simple. But they are not simple. It may well be that the courts will produce a test that will be acceptable to all of us. At the very least, why can't we wait until August or September or whenever the courts are going to come down with their decision? Why have you put people through this whole process and are only going to change it by ramming this legislation through?

Coopers and Lybrand said—this was one of the studies that was done by one of the insurance companies—that Ontario's rich accident benefits may cause small United States insurers to cut off coverage of clients travelling here and that this could be a potential blow to tourism. We start going on and on. We talk about tourism. We talk about jobs. Bill 164 is a very damaging bill. Why can't we spend more time? The minister says we're filibustering over here. If they were able to answer our questions, if they were able to simply say, "It's in the regulations," if it was in the regulations, then we would be able to answer those questions. We haven't seen the regulations.

I'm going to close by simply saying that our party is strongly opposed to this motion, this closure motion, this time allocation motion. There is much work to be done with respect to improving and perhaps withdrawing Bill 164. I would ask all members of this House to vote against this motion.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further debate?

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): As the parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for auto insurance, I can assure this House that I have been involved with this process from the long and bitter beginning of this legislation and now down to this motion with respect to time allocation today.

I want to correct some misapprehensions that this House, and ultimately the viewing public out there, may have. They talk about legislation being rammed down the throats of the Legislature. They talk about the legislation being rammed down the throats of the driving public. What I'd like to point out is that the members for the opposition either don't do the mathematics or very cheerfully and carefully forget the mathematics and just how much time we actually spent on the legislation.

We spent six hours and 46 minutes on second reading debate. Most of that time was spent by members of the

opposition voicing their concerns—six hours and 46 minutes. If we asked anybody or if we took a poll out on the street, I think people would concur that six hours and 46 minutes on second reading debate is a reasonable amount of time to discuss one item of business.

We then, because this is a democratic process and it was our view that we wanted to take this legislation out to the public through the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, spent 44 hours and 46 minutes in public hearings. That included a week of travel and a week here in the city. We went to places like Ottawa. We went to Windsor.

Interjection.

Mr Owens: There was Thunder Bay. Thank you. The member for London South, an able counsel who has represented many accident insurance victims, has indicated that we were also in Thunder Bay.

So again, 44 hours and 46 minutes in public hearings, and then we move to clause-by-clause. Thirty hours of clause-by-clause: 30 hours.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): How much is that altogether?

Mr Owens: The member for Oxford is astonished: 30 hours we have spent on clause-by-clause.

Mr Sutherland: How many hours altogether, Steve?

Mr Owens: The member for Oxford, a graduate or soon-to-be graduate of the University of Western Ontario, presumably in mathematics, can add this up and perhaps could tell me.

Mr Sutherland: Eighty hours.

Mr Owens: That's 80 hours, the member tells me. I've no reason to disbelieve the member for Oxford, who, by the way, on June 19 will be married to a wonderful person and unfortunately will not be able to participate for the next couple of weeks. June 19 wedding in London: Kimble Sutherland, member for Oxford.

I sat, with some level of astonishment—I see the member for Bruce has returned to this House. We had a discussion. The member for Bruce, as he indicated, was not there all the time. We had a discussion—

Mr Elston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I have never been out of this House all afternoon. I've listened to the entire debate. So unless that gentleman would like to reconsider what he is alleging, I would like to take issue with his—

The Deputy Speaker: It's not a point of order.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Please go ahead.

Mr Owens: We had a discussion on committee where we had an agreement that we wouldn't notice members' absences. However, the member for Bruce took it upon himself to note that the member from Hamilton Mountain was not in the House, and not only did that one time, but reiterated his point. So much for agreements that were

made on this committee or anywhere else in this House.

The member for Bruce has the nerve, the absolute nerve—I want to say to the member for Bruce that I have the highest regard for him as a member and quite possibly as a human being, depending on which day you happen to ask me this question. But I want to tell you, Mr Speaker, that the member for Bruce raises the issue of caucus solidarity.

I can't believe that this member would actually have the nerve to do this, raise the issue with respect to a time allocation motion, of course—just to make sure that I'm not going to be ruled out of order—that he would talk about this caucus as being a group of designated dissidents. I was absolutely amazed.

The number of times that we have had discussions with respect to who in the Liberal Party is actually the House leader and who is it that we're negotiating with at the House leaders' meetings versus what actually happens when this member goes back to his caucus, and can he deliver on deals or can he not deliver on deals—but I don't hold the member from Bruce at fault on this. But I think that in terms of sweeping one's doorstep before one makes one's comments, one should do that. I think that it's the ultimate in high-handedness and egocentricity that one would do that.

He talks about past members. The member for Windsor-Essex, who has left this House on May 31—his resignation took place, and he was there. He was there from the beginning and he knows what kind of subcommittee agreements were broken. There was absolutely no trust from the start to the finish. We would make agreements and then come back to the committee only to find that there was a totally different interpretation, some facts that one could clearly take exception to in terms of their presentation.

Just in closing, I clearly want to remind this House: six hours and 46 minutes of second-reading debate, 44 hours and 46 minutes of public hearings and 30 hours of clause-by-clause hearings.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Charlton has moved government notice of motion number 3. Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 15-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1800 to 1815.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Mr Charlton moves government notice of motion number 3. All those in favour of the motion will please rise, one at a time.

Ayes

Abel, Akande, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Carter, Charlton, Christopherson, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Dadamo, Duignan, Farnan, Fletcher, Frankford, Gigantes,

Grier, Haeck, Hampton, Hansen, Harrington, Haslam, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Lessard;

Mackenzie, MacKinnon, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martel, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Rizzo, Silipo, Sutherland, Ward, Wark-Martyn, Waters, Wessinger, White, Wildman, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winniger, Wiseman, Wood, Ziemba.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise, one at a time.

Nays

Arnott, Beer, Bradley, Brown, Cleary, Conway, Cousens, Cunningham, Curling, Eddy, Elston, Eves, Harnick, Harris, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Mahoney, Marland, McGuinty, McLean, Miclash, Murdoch (Grey), Murphy, O'Neil (Quinte), O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau), Offer, Poirier, Poole, Ramsay, Runciman, Ruprecht, Sterling, Stockwell, Tilson, Turnbull, Villeneuve.

The Deputy Speaker: The ayes are 61; the nays are 36. I declare the motion carried.

We will now have the late show, so we'll give a chance to people to leave.

Pursuant to standing order 34(b), the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

ONTARIO HYDRO

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Pursuant to standing order 34(a), the member for Renfrew North has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Environment and Energy concerning Ontario Hydro's decision, supported by the Ontario government, to offer deep discount rates to certain major industrial power users in Ontario.

The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the minister may reply for up to five minutes.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. As indicated yesterday, there have been a number of very significant developments at Ontario Hydro over the last number of months and I have been struck by the extent of those changes. I think the changes are in many ways positive, but I think it is important for any self-respecting Legislative Assembly that purports to exact some responsibility for the accountability of the largest corporation in the country to take a look at the oversight of these changes.

I don't want to embarrass my friends in the New Democratic Party, but I'll tell you, for many years I have listened to good friends in that party say that what we needed was a more rigorous oversight of the activities of Hydro. I suspect we have a number of Carlylians in the NDP today who think that just because we've appointed a great person to superintend the works of that great corporation, that's really the only oversight we need.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I meet with him every week.

Mr Conway: I don't really care that the minister meets with him every week. I fully expect that he would meet every week. I've a great regard for the member from Algoma.

I want to say this, that there have been developments in the following categories: The corporation has announced that this year it expects to report at least a \$1-billion loss, for reasons that are well understood. The corporation has indicated that for next year, calendar year 1994, the rate increase will be zero, and it has further indicated that effective May 1 this year, it is going to engage in some significant discounts for selected major industrial users.

I have said before, it may be that these are extremely positive developments. I can't quarrel with some of these activities. I'm pleased about a 0% rate increase for next year, obviously. I'm not happy about the \$1-billion write-down this year, but I think I understand some of that. But I ask the question, who is, in the public interest, looking at these particular proposals? It's not good enough to know that the minister meets once a week. It's not good enough to think even that Leo Jordan or Sean Conway think that these are particularly good things.

The rate increase, for example, is normally assessed and scrutinized by the Ontario Energy Board, but under our rules, because it is a 0% increase for next year, that rules out any OEB oversight of that decision, a decision that's going to have an impact on the finances of the corporation, I hope an impact that's going to be positive for many of the industrial and residential consumers as well.

On the question of the deep discounts, let me say again that the Ontario Energy Board Act in section 37 states, and I read directly from the act: "Where Ontario Hydro proposes to change any of its rates or charges for any customer, it shall submit the proposal to the minister not less than eight months before the date that the change is proposed to come into effect and the minister shall refer that proposal to the Ontario Energy Board." It says nothing in that section about experimental rates.

I have serious questions as to whether or not the regulation that was executed by the cabinet in April of this year is even legal. I presume the minister took that into account, but there is no mention in section 37 of the Energy Board Act making provision for experimental rates.

As I said yesterday, and as I indicated to the Municipal Electric Association today in Hamilton at its annual conference, I understand, I think, some of the arguments for an experimental project in deep discounting to major industrial users. That's not the point. What kind of a mechanism does the public have for a good, reasonable oversight of major changes at Ontario Hydro?

Let me say this: We are seeing a fundamental restructuring of the giant utility that is Ontario Hydro, and I expect that within the next five years we are going to see a dramatically altered Ontario Hydro.

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): We see it now.

Mr Conway: My friend the pensioner from Ontario Hydro, my neighbour the member for Lanark-Renfrew, says we should have seen it now, and in some respects he's right.

But let me say in conclusion that as we see a major restructuring of Hydro, we have got to see a fundamental change in the regulatory environment for that new corporation. The status quo is not acceptable and I am concerned that the government is proceeding with these major changes and no provision is being made for a more rigorous, more thoroughgoing regulatory oversight, and I would expect the minister to have something in this connection.

Hon Mr Wildman: I listened very carefully to the comments of my friend from Renfrew North, and I know of his interest in this matter. He's made a number of comments with which I agree, first, that there will be no rate increase in the rates for 1994 and, as a result, there is no requirement and no provision for a review by the Ontario Energy Board in 1993 because of the fact that there aren't any rate increases.

We all know that the current level of increase is unacceptable. A 31% increase, cumulative over three years, is just not acceptable to continue. We had to do something; Ontario Hydro had to take action. The recent rate increases that we've seen, 60% of which in 1992 and 1993 are related to bringing Darlington into service and dealing with other questions related to other nuclear facilities, would perhaps lead to a situation where industries in Ontario might claim that they are no longer competitive in relation to their electricity costs as compared to other utilities in New York state, Michigan or other competing jurisdictions.

As a result of that, I commend Ontario Hydro for the fact that it is proceeding not only with no rate increase in 1994, but with a commitment to maintain rate increases at or below inflation for the next decade.

With regard to the restructuring that is going on at Ontario Hydro, there is no question it is long overdue. There is no question for the need for a strong and vigorous oversight of the dealings and the changes at Ontario Hydro by the public.

Having said that, it is important for us to recognize that we have to deal with some immediate problems. In that restructuring, we also have to deal with the fact that Ontario Hydro has an unprecedented surplus of power, related largely to the recession and to the decrease in the demand. As a result of that, Ontario Hydro looked for some opportunities for dealing with proposals that had been made to it by some of the major industrial cus-

tomers. They asked for proposals and eight of those 40 major customers indicated that they were interested in looking at rate differentials.

There's no question that if Ontario Hydro were looking at rate differentials on an ongoing basis—a situation, I should remind the member, that does not involve a subsidy, because it is covering the cost of the provision of that power to those companies. So it does not involve a subsidy. But the point is, if we were to do that on an ongoing basis, there is no question there would have to be and would be, if there is at any time a proposal to provide those on anything more than an experimental basis, to comply with section 37, an Ontario Energy Board hearing so that all of the interested parties, the industrial consumers, the residential consumers, the Municipal Electric Association and environmental groups, energy groups, all interested groups would be able to have a say.

But that is not what is proposed. What is proposed is an experimental rate which is cost-based, which has an incremental generation cost plus the 0.5 cents per kilowatt-hour contribution to net income. So there is nothing in this that would require, in our view, on an experimental basis alone, a specific hearing.

In fact, if there is a proposal to do this on an ongoing

basis, the information that is accrued to the corporation and to its customers through the experimental use of these approaches will be useful to the OAB and to all of the intervenors that might be involved in that kind of process at that point. There is no purpose now to order a hearing that would in fact perhaps make it less likely that the consumers would be prepared to actually be involved in such an experiment on a short-term basis. But I accept the position that has been put forward by the member and I acknowledge his interest.

There is no question that there is a need for the restructuring in Ontario Hydro to be completed in the interests of the employees of Ontario Hydro, the communities dependent on the corporation, the customers of Ontario Hydro, both residential, commercial and industrial, and in the interests of the economy of this province as a whole, and there is certainly no question that we must have strong and stringent oversight. In this particular issue, though, it does not apply.

The Deputy Speaker: There being no further matters to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried and this House will stand adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1831.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor/Lieutenant-gouverneur: Lt Col The Hon/L'hon Henry N.R. Jackman CM, KStJ, BA, LLB, LLD

Speaker/Président: Hon/L'hon David Warner

Clerk/Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

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Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A.	L	
Beaches-Woodbine	Lankin, Hon/L'hon Frances	ND	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Brampton North/-Nord	McClelland, Carman	L	
Brampton South/-Sud	Callahan, Robert V.	L	
Brant-Haldimand	Eddy, Ron	L	
Brantford	Ward, Hon/L'hon Brad	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Finance / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Finances
Bruce	Elston, Murray J.	L	
Burlington South/-Sud	Jackson, Cameron	PC	
Cambridge	Farnan, Mike	ND	
Carleton	Sterling, Norman W.	PC	
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Kenora	Miclash, Frank	L	
Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles	Wilson, Gary	ND	
Kitchener	Ferguson, Will	Ind	
Kitchener-Wilmot	Cooper, Mike	ND	
Lake Nipigon/Lac-Nipigon	Pouliot, Hon/L'hon Gilles	ND	Minister of Transportation, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Transports, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
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Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W.	PC	
Lincoln	Hansen, Ron	ND	
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St Catharines	Bradley, James J.	L	
St Catharines-Brock	Haeck, Christel	ND	
St George-St David	Murphy, Tim	L	
Sarnia	Huget, Bob	ND	
Sault Ste Marie / Sault-Sainte-Marie	Martin, Tony	ND	
Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry	L	
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Scarborough-Ellesmere	Warner, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Speaker / Président
Scarborough North/-Nord	Curling, Alvin	L	
Scarborough West/-Ouest	Swarbrick, Hon/L'hon Anne	ND	Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation / ministre de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs
Simcoe Centre/-Centre	Wessenger, Paul	ND	
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Simcoe West/-Ouest	Wilson, Jim	PC	
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Sudbury East/-Est	Martel, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Timiskaming	Ramsay, David	L	
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Waterloo North/-Nord	Witmer, Elizabeth	PC	
Welland-Thorold	Kormos, Peter	ND	
Wellington	Arnott, Ted	PC	
Wentworth East/-Est	Morrow, Mark	ND	
Wentworth North/-Nord	Abel, Donald	ND	
Willowdale	Harnick, Charles	PC	
Wilson Heights	Kwinter, Monte	L	
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Windsor-Walkerville	Lessard, Wayne	ND	
York Centre/-Centre	Sorbara, Gregory S.	L	
York East/-Est	Malkowski, Gary	ND	
York Mills	Turnbull, David	PC	
York North/-Nord	Beer, Charles	L	
York South/-Sud	Rae, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	Premier, President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre, président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires gouvernementales
Yorkview	Mammoliti, George	ND	

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mardi 8 juin 1993

PÉTITIONS

Centres d'excellence artistique

M. Grandmaître 1244

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 1993 modifiant la Loi sur

l'assurance-santé, projet de loi 44

M. Morin 1245

Loi de 1993 modifiant le Code

des droits de la personne

(orientation sexuelle), projet

de loi 45

M. Murphy 1246

Loi de 1993 modifiant la Loi sur

les municipalités (exonération

d'impôts), projet de loi 46

M. Jordan 1246

CONTENTS

Tuesday 8 June 1993

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Government policy	
Mrs Caplan	1227
National Transportation Week	
Mr Turnbull	1227
United Food and Commercial Workers International Union	
Mr Wiseman	1227
Stratford Festival	
Mr O'Neil	1228
Budget debate	
Mr McLean	1228
Senior citizens	
Mr White	1228
Portugal National Day	
Mr Ruprecht	1228
Orthopaedic surgery	
Mrs Cunningham	1229
Norma Harris	
Mr Farnan	1229

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

Report on race relations	
Ms Ziemba	1229
Mr Curling	1231
Mr Cousens	1232
Mr Harnick	1232

ORAL QUESTIONS

Social contract negotiations	
Mrs McLeod	1232
Mr Rae	1233
Mr Harris	1235
Mr Rae	1235
Insurance tax	
Mrs McLeod	1234
Mr Laughren	1234
Victims of crime	
Mr Harris	1236
Mrs Boyd	1236
Mr Jackson	1236
Child care	
Mrs O'Neill	1237
Mr Silipo	1237

Race relations

Mr Harris	1238
Mrs Boyd	1238

Small business

Mr Perruzza	1239
Mr Laughren	1239

Conservation authorities

Mr Elston	1239
Mr Hampton	1240
Mr Jordan	1240

Recycling

Mr Paul R. Johnson	1241
Mr Charlton	1241

Assisted housing

Mr Cordiano	1241
Ms Gigantes	1241

Education legislation

Mrs Cunningham	1242
Mr Cooke	1242

PETITIONS

Gambling

Mr Bradley	1242
Mr Murdoch	1243
Mr Sutherland	1243
Ms Poole	1244
Mr Jordan	1245
Mrs Fawcett	1245
Mrs Marland	1245

International trade

Mr White	1243
Mr O'Connor	1244

Closing of agricultural college

Mr Ramsay	1243
-----------------	------

Native hunting and fishing

Mr McLean	1243
-----------------	------

Bicycling safety

Mr Cleary	1243
Mr Hayes	1244

Automobile insurance

Mr Jordan	1244
-----------------	------

Public service employees

Mr Runciman	1244
-------------------	------

Education financing

Mr Huget	1245
----------------	------

FIRST READINGS

Health Insurance Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 44	
Mr Morin	1245
Kitchener-Waterloo Foundation Act, 1993, Bill Pr14	
Mrs Witmer	1246
Peterborough Civic Hospital Repeals Act, 1993, Bill Pr76	
Ms Carter	1246
Human Rights Code Amendment Act (Sexual Orientation), 1993, Bill 45	
Mr Murphy	1246
Municipal Amendment Act (Tax Exemptions), 1993, Bill 46	
Mr Jordan	1246
City of North York Act, 1993, Bill Pr74	
Mr Perruzza	1246
Stratford, Huron and Bruce Railway Company Limited Act, 1993, Bill Pr30	
Mr Elston	1246
Cambridge-Guelph Railway Company Limited Act, 1993, Bill Pr26	
Mr Amott	1246
P.O.I.N.T. Incorporated Act, 1993, Bill Pr37	
Ms Poole	1246

GOVERNMENT NOTICE OF MOTION

Time allocation	
Mr Charlton	1246
Mr Elston	1250
Mr Tilson	1260
Mr Owens	1266

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Ontario Hydro	
Mr Conway	1267
Mr Wildman	1268

OTHER BUSINESS

Legislative Assembly press gallery event	
Mr Laughren	1229

Continued overleaf



No. 30

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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 9 June 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 9 juin 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

Table of contents

Table of contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears on the outside back cover.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Wednesday 9 June 1993

The House met at 1000.

Prayers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**LAND LEASE STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 1993**

**LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE
LES TERRAINS À BAIL**

Mr Wessenger moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 21, An Act to amend certain Acts with respect to Land Leases / Loi modifiant certaines lois en ce qui concerne les terrains à bail.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the honourable member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Paul Wessenger (Simcoe Centre): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I'm very pleased to be here this morning with respect to moving second reading of this bill, An Act to amend certain Acts with respect to Land Leases, which is known as the Land Lease Statute Law Amendment Act, 1993.

I'd first of all like to acknowledge that, although I don't see that they've arrived yet—oh, I see some—we have some people here representing the Owned-Home Leased-Lot Federation. I'd like to thank them for coming this morning, and particularly, I have a representative from the land lease community in my own area, Sandy Cove Acres, and Mr Gordon Mills has many representatives from his community in Wilmot Creek. I must thank the federation for its contribution towards my bill in bringing forward the problems and reinforcing the need for legislation in this area.

I'd also like to thank my colleagues for giving me the time to present this bill today. I was lower down in the original order and I'd like to thank them for letting me substitute for them so we could introduce this important legislation during this session. I appreciate also the support of my colleagues for this legislation.

The purpose of the bill is to provide additional statutory protection to tenants who lease land for use as a site for their mobile home or land lease community home. A land lease community home is a permanent structure used as a home and situate on leased land, and many members, including myself, have received concerns about security of tenure, weak bargaining power of tenants and unreasonable restrictions. This legislation addresses some of the major concerns of tenants.

My interest in this legislation has grown out of two facts: my practice of law in the city of Barrie for the last 20 years, particularly in the real estate area, and my involvement in the political aspects.

I might just explain that for many years, I've acted for many people in the past who were residents of the land lease community Sandy Cove Acres to the south, and I had many representations to me and concerns with respect to their problems with respect to marketability of their home, the problems they had with respect to unreasonable restrictions, the insecurity of tenure they had, the fact they felt they didn't have sufficient security and also, at that time, a concern about unreasonable rent increases.

Also, my area had lost two mobile home parks in the last three years as the home parks were converted to other uses, one of them a subdivision. Again, what this means to residents of a mobile home park is that they will not be able to find, usually, another place to put their mobile home. They will lose their equity in their home, and this is quite devastating. People who live in these homes are usually people on lower incomes, many of them are elderly people, often into their late 80s.

I believe that mobile home parks and land lease communities provide a necessary form of low-cost housing in Ontario, and I think anyone who believes that they form that type of necessary, alternative, low-cost housing ought to support providing them the same protection that other tenants have and protecting their equity and protecting their marketability.

The subjects of the legislation, I might add, are with respect to mobile homes and mobile home parks, and land lease, community-owned homes and land lease communities. It covers both areas.

The land lease communities are now protected only by the Rent Control Act, 1992, but are not covered by the Rental Housing Protection Act, the Landlord and Tenant Act or the Planning Act. The other subject of my legislation, mobile home parks, are presently protected by the Landlord and Tenant Act and covered by the Planning Act. There seems to be no logic whatsoever to have less rights apply to an owner of a land lease community home than to an owner of a mobile home, particularly in view of the fact that when I talk about protecting equity interests, the equity interest of the land lease community home is probably greater than that of the mobile home.

Both land lease community homes and mobile homes are not protected by the provisions of the Rental Housing Protection Act. Again, one could ask, why are tenants, who have no equity in their homes, being protected under the Rental Housing Protection Act while owners of mobile homes or land lease community homes, who, as I indicated, have that substantial equity, do not have such protection?

For many residents in Simcoe county and throughout Ontario who are owners of mobile homes or land lease

community homes, such protection is long overdue. Simcoe county has the largest number of mobile home units of any county or district in Ontario. That's approximately somewhat over 2,000. In addition, Simcoe county has approximately 2,000 land lease community homes, again, the largest of any district or county in Ontario.

As I indicated earlier, Simcoe county has lost two mobile home parks in the last few years, with mobile home owners basically losing the equity in their homes when their parks were closed. Another mobile home park is at risk in my area, and it's at risk with closure. The residents received notices of tentative eviction. Unfortunately for them, the owner was unable to effect a deal to sell the park, so they're still living there, but they're living on the verge of losing their equity, and I think it's important that we now provide that protection. The question is, do we want to protect the equity, the tenure of ownership of owners of mobile homes? Should we not protect a low-cost home ownership alternative?

It's interesting to note that mobile homes and land lease community homes are much less of an ownership alternative in Ontario than in the US, and I would suggest that one of the reasons for it is that it doesn't have the security of tenure or the protection or the marketability that such type of ownership has south of the border.

1010

My bill addresses the most pressing need of protecting the tenure of land lease homes and mobile homes by amending the Rental Housing Protection Act to have it apply to land lease community homes and mobile homes.

The provisions of the act are deemed to be effective May 19, 1993, with respect to the prohibitions against conversion. The amendment also provides for exemption from the prohibitions under the act in prescribed circumstances where the conversion is to a cooperative which will be resident-controlled or to a condominium.

This amendment will hopefully restrict the displacement of owners of homes in both mobile home parks and land lease community homes.

My bill also amends the Landlord and Tenant Act. There's no reason why the owners of land lease community homes are deprived of the protection of that act. It must have been an oversight in the past. My amendment corrects that.

It also invalidates first rights of refusal on the sale of a home. It permits tenants to place "For Sale" signs on their home. It creates a reserve fund obligation for the landlord for those types of services which normally would be provided by a municipality. It excludes seasonal mobile homes from additional protection under the act.

My bill also amends the Planning Act to provide that

land lease communities are subject to the same provisions as mobile home parks with respect to planning controls. This specifically ensures that site plan control and subdivision provisions will apply to land lease communities.

I believe this package of amendments enhances the protection of land lease community home owners and mobile homes. The legislation is complex and technical, as is the law of landlord and tenant, and planning law. I know there'll be amendments and I know there'll be improvements as we move to public hearings with respect to this legislation. I look forward to receiving the suggestions for improvement.

I urge all members to support this legislation to give us a framework to start with, to work with, to provide the needed protection for these residents and these owners in our mobile homes parks. I look forward to further discussion in committee on this legislation.

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): I'm very happy to speak to this bill. I think the intent and the effort put forward by my colleague Mr Wessenger is to be commended.

I understand what he's attempting to do with this private member's legislation. However, I must say that this bill is desperately flawed. There are problems with it that I think will jeopardize this type of accommodation for good.

I also want to say that if the government, and I say this to Mr Wessenger—the effort put forth by the government to recognize this type of accommodation as affordable accommodation which is provided in the private sector, the very kind of accommodation that we see a lack of in this province, and a lack of effort on the part of the government to stimulate activity in the private sector, to continue to provide private sector, affordable accommodation—this government is doing very precious little in the private sector to put forward initiatives which would see the creation and the increase in affordable housing.

The government has halted any programs to provide government land for affordable housing in the private sector, getting the private sector to work with government to provide that affordable housing.

This is an area—this sector—which has that affordability component: providing affordable homes for people who need them in the private sector. For that reason, I say to you that this provision, this legislation, is very important in that we do not jeopardize this sector.

I understand the need for protection of tenants and I think there are a number of things which have been put forward in this bill which speak to that and can be applauded, but I think this bill is fatally flawed and I want to point out the ways in which it is.

Under the provisions of the amendment to the Land-

lord and Tenant Act, the concept of a reserve fund, which is what is being called for under Bill 21—let's look at that for a moment—would work rather well for new establishments, but for older parks it's not feasible. Quite frankly, there wouldn't have been enough time for the reserve funds at that point to have provided sufficient cushion to meet the needs of the older parks, which obviously would have greater amounts of capital needs over time. Those funds would be additional to what would be required in a new establishment, and let's face it, the amount of cushion there would not be sufficient to meet those requirements.

With those provisions in Bill 21, you are seriously going to hamper the efforts of landlords to meet those capital needs. So I think this reserve fund is a basic flaw in Bill 21. Seriously, I think it would destroy landlords. I think we would see the complete annihilation of this type of sector in the housing community, and as a result, there would not be much to commend this legislation when that was brought about.

So I think we have some serious problems with the reserve fund, how it's going to work. Quite frankly, you already have the imposition of rent controls, and the reserve fund calls for amounts to be contributed from rent. As a result of rent controls already putting a cap on the amount that could be granted in the form of rents by tenants to landlords, it's a double whammy for landlords. There are no additional funds to make up for those capital needs and things like snow removal, garbage collection, that are already operational costs. They're not capital costs, they're additional to this. So I think you have problems with that.

As a result of that section alone, I cannot support this legislation, because you threaten the very survival of landlords in this area. You would lead to the demise of this type of housing without giving due consideration for what this means; therefore, I have problems with that.

Under the Rental Housing Protection Act, you would amend this to include mobile home parks. The problem with it is that you would effectively preclude conversion to co-op type of accommodation. Therefore, that's another flaw in this legislation. Under the Rental Housing Protection Act, the amendments that you're making would effectively not allow for the conversion to co-ops. I have a problem with that. I think that's something that would also be an option available to people living in this type of accommodation that you would not like to prevent, at least I hope not.

Under the Planning Act, certainly the amendments there call for changes which would now prohibit landlords from doing the kind of work to service lots, and, with respect to the size of lots, that would all be under the discretion given to municipalities. I think there's a problem with respect to the provisions under that section.

I'm running out of time, because my colleague also wants to speak to this legislation. I've just quickly pointed out what are the basic flaws in this legislation. Some of the other provisions would be amenable to us, but I think these speak to the heart of the legislation and the fundamental principles behind the legislation. I have difficulty supporting this and allowing it to go to committee, so I will not support this legislation.

1020

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): The actual consideration behind the bill is certainly something that I think all members would agree with; however, I feel that this legislation is very flawed in the approach that is being taken.

I'm concerned that when we consider that two of the particular developments that are within the areas of the member, Sandy Cove Acres and Wilmot Creek—I know for a fact that the owners of those developments were never consulted. The member only consulted with the tenants, and that seems a most inappropriate way of proceeding. The intent of making sure that the tenancies are protected is, as I've said, valuable, but what we do with this bill is that we produce once again another confrontational approach. It is fair to say that with the imposition of rent controls on these parks, and then with this bill, it would be impossible to contemplate that any further such developments as Wilmot Creek or Sandy Cove, to name just two, would ever again be developed in this province as long as such legislation was in place.

I want to turn to some testimony that we received during Bill 4 hearings. This was from Martin Grove Village in Waterloo. I'm just going to read some extracts from a letter that they presented in their brief to Bill 4:

"I am the owner and operator of a mobile home park located in the township of Woolwich immediately adjacent to the northerly boundary of the city of Waterloo. There are presently 78 homes in the village, housing in excess of 200 people, most of whom are relatively low-income and retired, elderly people. The tenants own their own mobile home and lease the land from me. As landlord, I provide hydro, water and septic sanitary services to each of these homes. These are not seasonal or recreational trailers, but homes in which, under the permitted zoning, the residents live year-round. Some residents have been living in the village for in excess of 30 years. Most residents have their entire life savings invested in their mobile homes.

"Over the past few years I have been engaged in discussions with the township of Woolwich and the regional municipality of Waterloo, the Grand River Conservation Authority and the Ministry of the Environment with respect to the designation of these lands under the local official plan as a settlement area which would allow for the expansion of this existing settlement as a mobile/modular home park.

"The required official plan amendment and zone change application have been approved in principle, subject to certain conditions which would lead to the required replacement of the existing hydro, water and septic sanitary system. These existing systems are approximately 30 years old and are recognized by me as well as the municipal and other government authorities as being very much in need of replacement. Engineering reports initiated by me confirm that the need for replacement arises out of normal wear and tear."

I'm going to just skip on a little bit. Essentially, this community says:

"Current rents average \$181 per month, which includes \$50 per month for taxes and about \$40 per month for maintenance. This rental fee is far below market rent and provides for no more than a break-even point for me. Certainly, there is no capacity in me to provide for the extraordinary capital expenditures of replacing existing services without an increase in rent."

So here we have the problem that, having brought these trailer parks under rent controls, we now have the double whammy of various municipal and governmental services saying that services need to be upgraded. The landlord in these parks has to operate as collecting the taxes and has to provide all of those services which are normally provided by a municipality. So to the extent that these people cannot make any money out of their operation—and I'm particularly thinking not so much of the Wilmot Creek and the Sandy Cove Acres, but those ones which have been in existence for a longer period of time, where they're not so much mobile homes as trailers but they are used year-round. We are having the problem that the operator cannot make any money, doesn't have the money to upgrade the services and yet is being told that he must, and now we have legislation which will essentially not allow him even to be able to sell the land for some further development at the time the leases come forward. That is very troubling and goes to a lot of serious questions about property rights in this province and the constant erosion of property rights that we're seeing.

But most importantly, the concern is, how do we protect those tenants who live in communities and the people who potentially would be tenants in an expanded community such as Wilmot Creek in the future? Certainly the landlords of these developments will not see fit to expand those communities to the detriment of people who will be retiring in the future.

So for this reason, we have great trouble with the thrust of this bill. We certainly say that we are on side in terms of protecting those tenants, and I believe we can find ways of protecting those tenants and protecting the values of the properties that are owned both by the tenants, who own the mobile homes, and by the owners of those developments, in another way. But this bill certainly is not the way to achieve those ends, so for

this reason I will be opposing it.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): It's a pleasure to rise in the House today and talk to my colleague from Simcoe to Bill 21.

I was interested in the comments that the member for Lawrence made about needing affordable housing. In Hansard yesterday he got up and he said this affordable housing is a complete waste.

Interjection.

Mr Mills: That's what you said in Hansard.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Lawrence on a point of order.

Mr Cordiano: Mr Speaker, I have to rise because the member is completely misconstruing what I had said yesterday. I was referring to the non-profit housing program, not affordable housing.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. This is not a point of order. The member for Durham East.

Mr Mills: I'd just like to recognize the wonderful people from my riding of Durham East who are here today to support this bill. They are in there; they are up here.

[Applause]

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I would ask the people who are in the galleries to refrain from applauding. This is unruly. The member for Durham East.

Mr Mills: I think it speaks oceans to this bill and the concerns when 80 people from Wilmot Creek have come here at their own expense this morning by private bus. They're in the process of getting in here; some are here, some are in the gallery. I think that speaks oodles.

When I attended an all-candidates meeting at the Roundhouse in Wilmot Creek way back in August 1990, one of the things that came out of that all-candidates meeting was addressing the concerns of the folks who lived there. Those were their concerns, and I made a vow that, should I win Durham East—and there were lots of people very surprised that I did, particularly the Conservatives—I would make this one of my focuses, to get these things right.

1030

When I was elected, I had the pleasure of having an intern serve with me, and I directed that intern to research this matter for three months. It's a very complex piece of legislation, which I commend my colleague and friend Mr Wessinger for. It involved the Attorney General's office, it involved Municipal Affairs, it involved the Ministry of Housing. It was complex. After my intern had done his three-month research, we went to Wilmot Creek with the results. Our ideas of how we will resolve that were soundly endorsed by about 500 people who were in that Roundhouse hall that night as we gave this presentation.

I say to the member for York Mills that he's out of

touch with reality if he doesn't recognize that the people in this type of leased-lot communities need protection; they've been crying out for it. And then he has the audacity to stand in this place and say, "What are the landlords going to do?"

I say that the landlords should have addressed those inequities a long time ago and we wouldn't be here today doing this bill if they'd recognized that.

[Applause]

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I would ask the members in the gallery to refrain from applauding; otherwise I will have to take away your privilege and you won't be able to stay where you are.

Mr Mills: These folks, as you know, are in their golden years and this is so important to them. I guess they feel it to be such an important piece of legislation that they have difficulty in hiding their enthusiasm for the wonderful work my colleague for Simcoe East has done in bringing this here today.

I'm limited on time. I have to go away and sit on a committee and I have other members of our caucus who represent leased-lot communities who also want to speak. I just say to those members over there that this has been brought about by circumstances that could not be addressed any other way except through this legislation.

Again, full marks to Paul Wessinger for his work on this bill and bringing it forward in this House today. I hope everybody in here supports it, because, believe it or not, every community that you live in, there are people in similar circumstances and they're looking to you members for support. When the votes comes later in today, they will take note of all those people who do not support this, believe you me.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): In the very short time that I have, I want to address three issues, but before I do I have to make the comment that they've brought all these marvellous, wonderful people—I am very close to seniors as I approach that period of my golden lifetime, but to bring them here under the assumption that this bill is going to become public law is a sham, an absolute sham.

The member from Simcoe Centre knows that. Your government of the day was not prepared to bring this legislation forward; it in fact died on the order paper on the last occasion. These people should know that this is an exercise in the height of public relations and this bill will never make it past this second reading, if it gets passed.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Thank you. The member for Brampton South.

Mr Callahan: There have been only two private bills—I don't like fooling seniors the way you people are trying to do it. There have only been two bills in the

history of the Legislature that have ever made it to public policy as a result of private members' bills. One of them was on daylight saving, which moved it a week ahead; the second one was Mr Mahoney's when he brought in the age qualification for gambling in the corner stores—

Interjections.

Mr Callahan: —because your government didn't have the good sense to realize that eight-year-olds were in fact going to be spending their lunch money on buying lottery tickets for football games.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Brampton South has the floor. Those who want to have the opportunity to voice your opinion, you'll have a chance to do so, but please respect the member for Brampton South.

Mr Callahan: So I find it really incredible that you would try to fool these good people who have come all the way here from Barrie and other areas.

Having said that, I think it's incredible that you never bothered to talk to both sides of the picture here. I have three points to address. The first one was that these contracts have been around for 25 years. People obviously have lived in many of these communities, at least the three I'm familiar with, for 25 years.

The NDP seems to think it can interfere with everybody's rights, take away their rights in midstream if it wants. There are at least four provisions in this bill that are retroactive, which is clearly contrary to any principle of English equity, any principle of English justice, any principle of democracy.

The first-right-of-refusal clause makes sense because these people live in a community where, if there is not a right of first refusal, you could have someone moving into that community, and it's a very tight-knit community, perhaps who would not be desirable, who could not financially carry the burden. Therefore, a greater burden is thrust upon those residents who already live there.

The question of receiving 95% of the value of the item: If they sold it through a real estate agent they'd probably pay 5% or 6%, so you eliminate the necessity of having to go through that exercise by this being done in this way.

Finally, the question of signs. Just think about it this way: If in your community, in one of your subdivisions, because of a downturn in the economy or for whatever other reason, every house had a For Sale sign on it and you were trying to sell your house and you took somebody through that subdivision, they'd look around and they'd say: "My heavens, who wants to move into this community, because they're all selling their homes. There must be something wrong." This is precisely what can happen.

Interjections.

Mr Callahan: I love you people over there. You put

your views forward and then you shout and act up like children, taking away from my time to have an opportunity in a democratic chamber to be able to express the views that are there.

It makes sense. Have any of you been to these communities? Probably not. I would venture to say that many of you have not even read the bill that has been presented by the member from Simcoe Centre—simply because you wouldn't understand it, probably. It is a bill so complex that, even if it were to be passed, which is highly unlikely—in fact, as I say, looking at the history of this place, it's unlikely that the government will ever pick up that piece of legislation.

The member from Simcoe Centre has brought in a piece of legislation. He's brought all these people a great distance, promising them the world. I have to tell you people, you have had a nice trip, you will see a great exercise in public relations here, but you wait and see if the New Democratic Party brings that legislation in. I'll bet you dollars to doughnuts they don't. The fact is that they've not bothered to tell you the reasons why some of these aspects are there. Some of my colleagues have addressed them, the question of financial viability, the question of continuing these accommodations.

I know for a fact, in talking with seniors I know who live in these parks, that they are quite happy. They live in a seniors' setting. The people they're dealing with are seniors. They have many things in common. It's almost like a country-club-style operation. You start putting signs up all over the place, and you'll find that will have a detrimental effect on the community itself.

The member from Simcoe Centre said that in his previous life as a lawyer he used to have people coming in to him and complaining about the restrictions in these contracts. Well, my question to the member from Simcoe Centre is, as a lawyer, what did you do about it? Did you simply let them sign the contracts? If you did, then you must have thought the conditions were not unreasonable. Why didn't you remind them of it? Why do you bring it forward here in the Legislature and attempt to convince these people that you can change the law? I would suggest that your responsibility would have been to have told these people that the contractual rights were too interfering with their rights.

Suddenly, it just becomes a hot political issue: "Let's see how we can pacify these people." Well, I have to say to you that I find that regrettable. I think it's regrettable to do it to any group from Ontario, but particularly to do it to people who are seniors, who are retired, whose income is limited, who perhaps are looking to live in tranquillity in their golden years, and you bus them all down here with the anticipation that this bill is going to become law.

I say to you that Mr Rae, the Premier of this province, did not consider this bill to be significant enough to bring it in as a piece of government legislation. He

required you to do it. In fact, it was so significant that, in the first session of this Parliament, it died on the order paper. So I find that really incredible. This game of political chess that's played is absolutely and unbelievably bad.

The member from Durham East says that he made it a promise and that he's fulfilling this promise. Well, I have to tell you, it's no wonder the people don't believe politicians any more, because when politicians make promises like that and then bring it into a forum such as this—our present structure of the Legislature does not allow for it to get anywhere—I suggest it's a sham.

I'm going to be voting against this because I don't believe that pulling the wool over the eyes of particularly good seniors in this province is fair. In addition to that, if this matter does pass, it should certainly go to public hearings so that both sides of the coin can be heard.

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I just want to take a few minutes on this bill, because I find that the bill is just another imposition on the owner of the land, the landlord or whatever you wish to refer to him as. First of all, these problems that are being identified can be handled very well at the municipal level. I know in my riding you can have the bylaw—

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): They don't think so. They don't agree with you.

1040

Mr Jordan: Perhaps when their part was established, the municipality did not in fact have the proper bylaw in place to protect the tenant, but we don't need to come from this level of government to protect the tenant in a mobile home park.

The mobile home park under the jurisdiction of the municipality can very well pass local legislation that will give the required protection to the tenants of that park and then you have an understanding from the beginning right at the municipal level on the conditions under which you establish a home in that park. So on the basis that this is more entanglement, if you will, of the provincial government with local municipal government, I would have to say that I could not support the bill.

I do not say that the tenants and the land being leased by the different people in these parks do not need the attention of the municipal law, but they sure don't need a bill such as this to be put in place. And as the previous speaker pointed out, this will never come into place anyhow, so you might better be concentrating at home with your local government and getting the proper legislation in place at the municipal level so that it actually applies to that mobile home park that the concern is concentrated on.

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): I would like to congratulate my colleague the member from Simcoe

Centre for bringing the Land Lease Statute Law Amendment Act to this House and I would like to thank him on behalf of Middlesex tenants, some of whom are here today, because they will benefit from this legislation. And I must say, my constituents, the people of Middlesex, who live in leased-lot communities have waited for Bill 21 for a very, very long time and have shown great courage in helping this government and me particularly to pursue this legislation.

Leased-lot communities represent an important opportunity for the provision of affordable housing. This affordability needs to be protected. This housing stock must be protected because the people who need it, who utilize it, are for the most part seniors on fixed incomes. Leased-lot mobile home parks give these seniors the opportunity to live independently and to be part of a caring, mutually supportive community. In order for these communities to survive, the costs associated with residents must be reasonable and cannot be allowed to rise unreasonably.

In Middlesex, tenants were faced with increases in 1988-89 of more than 12% and in 1990-91 of more than 11%. Bill 121, the 1992 Rent Control Act, put an end to these huge rent increases. That government bill protects Middlesex tenants, and I regard this legislation, Bill 21, as an important companion piece to the Rent Control Act because Bill 21 extends the provisions of the Rental Housing Protection Act to leased-lot communities, assures the continued availability of such affordable housing stock.

Tenants in leased-lot communities will now have recourse through the Ontario Municipal Board to appeal any municipally approved conversion of their rental units. Fears expressed by my constituents that their communities could be converted to other uses and their equity lost and them left with no place for their modular homes have now finally been addressed.

So we have rent control in Bill 121 and protection of land lease communities as part of the affordable housing stock in Bill 21. Bill 21 also extends part IV of the Landlord and Tenant Act to leased-lot communities. This does a number of things, but I'd like to focus specifically on the right of sale of modular homes by their owners. Under this bill, landlords can no longer be given or demand first refusal on the sale of a home. Tenants now are free to place For Sale signs on their units. Imagine that, Mr Speaker: anyone in this province not being free to put a sign on their homes. It's just unspeakable.

They are also free to place the sale of those units in the hands of an outside real estate agent. For Middlesex residents, this effectively eliminates the possibility of a landlord interfering in the sale of their property. Unfortunately, some landlords have insisted upon acting exclusively as the realty agent for mobile home sales within their parks and have collected commissions,

some as high as 8%. That's two to two and a half percentage points higher than outside agents charge. Some landlords have actually discouraged prospective buyers, blocked the sale of mobile homes by their owners and then have offered the frustrated and often desperate tenant-owner a much-reduced price for that home.

I want you to consider that these tenants at the mercy of unscrupulous landlords are often seniors on fixed incomes, sometimes frail, sometimes vulnerable, sometimes easily intimidated. These people are among all in our society who should never be wilfully harmed, intimidated or preyed upon by anyone. I'm pleased that Bill 21 places into law provisions to prevent this kind of abuse of my constituents, including our seniors.

I would like to leave time for other members of our caucus to speak to this legislation and would conclude by pledging my support for this bill brought forward by the member of Simcoe Centre. It will help to bring a measure of tranquillity to Ontario leased-lot retirement communities.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I am pleased to join in this debate today. I've had a lot of experience with regard to mobile home parks in my riding. We have Big Cedar, which is owned by the residents. It took some time to get it in that ownership. We have Fergus Hill Estates that just this past week has made arrangements or is looking to make arrangements to sell the lots that are in the park to the residents in that park for about \$17,000 a lot.

During the last election campaign, the member of the New Democratic Party indicated in my riding that he would encourage the government to bring in legislation to change the act so that the people who live in these mobile home parks would have the right of ownership. Well, I expect that would happen, but the right of ownership comes with purchasing the lots and agreements with the owners. There's no way that anybody is going to own the land that they're on without purchasing it. A lot of people indicate that they want to do that, and I think it can happen. I know Big Cedar went through many different problems to get it into the ownership of the people who are there. I think that's the right and the proper way to do it.

But the right and the proper way for this government to deal with it is in government legislation. Most of the members know that private members' bills here don't go anywhere. What they do is allow you to have a good discussion on the subject at hand to bring out the pros and cons of what this legislation is all about.

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): What happened to Cunningham's bill? Where is it?

Mr McLean: The member is chatting over there when he should be listening to the facts as brought before this House with regard to mobile home parks.

So I say to you: Why is the government not bringing in legislation to amend the Landlord and Tenant Act? Why are they bringing in a private member's bill which is going to go nowhere? It's not going anywhere, so the people might as well know that.

I know the concern that the member has had and the pressure that he has had from the church, the old church place in Barrie. There are others within the area that—there's pressure on it, but you're not going to amend the Landlord and Tenant Act in any private member's bill. It's totally impossible to do that. It could happen, but it is very unlikely.

Why isn't the government bringing in the legislation to deal with it? They're not. So I say, until that happens, then this isn't going anywhere.

The Landlord and Tenant Act is there. They want: "The definition of 'residential premises' in section 1 of the Landlord and Tenant Act is amended by inserting after 'means'... 'subject to section 128.2.'"

"The definition of 'residential premises' in section 1 of the act is repealed and the following substituted:... 'land intended and used as a site for a mobile home or a land lease community home used for residential purposes, whether or not the landlord also supplies the mobile home'" park.

A lot of questions in this bill are unanswered, and I can tell you that this bill will not go anywhere other than get the first reading, the second reading here, and maybe referred to committee.

1050

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I'm really pleased to rise on this bill today, because right now, at this moment, though we've got a lot of people here from land lease communities, right out there we've got a number of people sitting in the community centre right in Sutton-By-The-Lake and they're watching this on television. So when the members of this House stand up and say, "Well, you've only got 80 people here and it's not going to go anywhere because we don't care and we're not going to let a private member's bill go anywhere," those people are listening and those people are supporters.

It's time that we had legislation come forward that's going to represent the needs of a lot of people, and this does that. It recognizes that people who are in land lease communities are different than other types of tenants. They haven't had that sort of recognition, and it's time that we did that.

You know, Mr Speaker, in this House we do a number of things. Sometimes there's a lot of rhetoric. Sometimes we present petition after petition on a lot of things we are really concerned about. Last year I presented petition after petition to this Legislature, and the reason I did was that I was concerned about the residents of Sutton-By-The-Lake. We stand in our place

and, "I've got a petition whereas the residents of," and, you know, sometimes people just don't seem to listen.

If I take a look at this petition that I did present to this Legislature, I could take a look at a lot of the clauses and they're in this legislation. Some of them we acted upon when we took a look and changed the Rent Control Act. Last year we changed it. So what are the amendments? Before we even got to this point, it has already been taken care of.

We talk about, "Whereas the residents feel that the government of Ontario should examine...no protection against conversion to other uses which would result in the loss of home owners' equity." Well, this is covered, and I want to applaud the member from Simcoe Centre for bringing it forward.

Another clause here, "Whereas there are often arbitrary rules set by landlords and owners of land lease communities which place unfair restrictions and collect commissions on resales of residents' homes," I mean, it's reprehensible that that should happen, but it has been happening and this bill is going to address it. We have to take a look at that. They've got some concerns because it doesn't have everything in there.

I met on Sunday April 18 in the afternoon—it was a nice sunny afternoon—with some representatives from the Ontario Owned-Home Leased-Lot Federation, and they presented me with a wish list. There's the wish list. They presented that to me. We sat down, we talked about it, we made some revisions, and not everything is on that, and I recognize that we like to have everything on there. Maybe when we talk about hearing that the landlords—"When are you going to let the landlords?"

Well, let's get this bill into committee and we can hear from the landlords, and we can hear from the federation, we can hear from the good folks from Sutton-By-The-Lake, we can hear from the folks at Wilmot Creek, we can hear from the folks at Sandy Cove. There are a lot of people out there who want to talk to us, and I think that we have to do that.

I guess the difference is, in the past, governments have said: "Oh, I'm sorry. Private members' bills go nowhere. Backbench members don't have a say here. If the government doesn't bring it forward, that's the way it happens."

Well, Mr Speaker, you're right, there are priorities that the government must take and it brings them forward. There's a lot of us members—I see a lot of good members surrounding me here, the members from Huron, Windsor-Walkerville. There's a lot of members here who have this very concern and there's a lot of caucus government members that are going to make sure that this goes forward, that we get a chance to go out to public hearings and we make this legislation law, because it's important that we take a look at the needs.

I'm proud of the fact that I represent the people who

are sitting out there in that clubhouse right now from Sutton-By-The-Lake, who haven't given me a chance to say, "Well, sorry, it's not going to happen," because they've been coming to me regularly and saying, "Look, we've got to do something. We've got some concerns, Mr O'Connor. We want you to deal with it. We want you to take this to the floor of the Legislature and talk about it," and that's what I'm here doing today, because I think it's important that we do that.

These residents have talked to me about maintenance problems that they've had, operational problems, and they feel that the establishment of a reserve fund might help solve some of this. We don't know whether this is going to be the perfect answer, and the way we're going to do this is by getting it out to committee.

We've got an opportunity here, as private members, during private members' business, to make a long-lasting change, a change that is going to affect a lot of people, and quite often they're seniors. They're on a fixed income. Some of their pensions haven't gone up for a long time, and we're going to make something that's going to affect them.

I think it's time that we all stand in our place, support Mr Wessenger in this bill, because it's important not only for the folks in my riding but these communities right across the province because they're—I hope the opposition are going to support us because they're in your ridings too.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I hope this does make it to committee.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Are you going to support us?

Mr Stockwell: Yes, I really do hope it does make it to committee, because then an opportunity will be had, an opportunity that all these people—these people have come down at their own time—can just see how truly committed this government is to ensuring this piece of legislation pass. Because you know full well your standing there and lecturing and posturing with the rhetoric doesn't serve one simple conclusion.

The simple conclusion is: Will this piece of legislation pass that's apparently going to help service these poor people who are in a very difficult situation? I hope so, because once and for all we can put it to rest, because you know, Mr Speaker, as we know, as they know—and maybe these people don't—that if this were a priority with this government, it would be on the orders of the day, put forward by the cabinet and supported by your caucus.

No, it has not. Why is it not? Because they want to stand here, like Mr Mills, like Mr O'Connor, and offer empty promises, simple rhetoric with no commitment for cheap vote-getting ability.

I hope this passes so we can get it to committee and the committee can take it up and we can see how purely

flawed in legislative and legalese this is. We can get these people in to make deputations and then I want to be there the day when you have to explain to these people that it has fallen off the legislative table because your government doesn't support it, because it's flawed. I want to hear your rhetoric and promises and petitions on that day when that comes around.

Mr Speaker, I'm going to support it. You know why I'm going to support it? I don't want to leave these people left alone. I'm supporting it because I want to bring this to the front burner and I want to put you people on the spot and I want these people to know when they're being led down the garden path for votes. That's where you're being led, down the garden path for votes. They may not know it now, but they will certainly know it in some number of weeks when this hits committee and you stand up and make all the public apologies because your word isn't worth salt.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Huron, please. Mr Wessenger, you have two minutes.

Mr Wessenger: I want to be there too when this law becomes finally legislation. I'd just like to say that I know there's a commitment from my caucus colleagues to do everything in our power to ensure that this legislation does become law. I believe that, with the support of my caucus, we can bring it to committee, we can ensure it goes to third reading and we can ensure it becomes enacted.

Another thing I'd like to say: I realize this isn't perfect. I didn't have the benefit of the Ministry of Housing, I didn't have the benefit of the Attorney General's ministry, I didn't have the benefit of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in drafting this bill. I had to do it the best I could as a lawyer, working with legislative counsel, who did yeoman service in helping me bring this bill forward.

I realize there will be amendments, but that's the whole purpose of hearings, that's the whole purpose of committee hearings, to get that input to make sure that we do have better legislation. I've taken a lot of legislation through, even that drafted by government, and I know often there are many amendments there because they're flawed. This is not the final form, but it's a good beginning, a good framework to start on.

The other thing is that I'd just like to refer to a couple of criticisms from the member for Lawrence because I think—and I can understand why he made the comments; it's a very technical area—first of all he said the reserve fund was problematic. I agree it's a difficult area, and one of the provisions I put in the bill was to provide for alternative security to a reserve fund, because I realize those difficulties.

The other misunderstanding that several members seem to have is that this bill prohibits conversion to

condominiums or to cooperatives. Again, I provided in the bill that the Rental Housing Protection Act does not apply in prescribed circumstances where there is a conversion to a condominium or a cooperative, and the idea is to ensure that where residents want that conversion, it will occur.

So I ask all members, in view of these comments, to support this legislation. Let's get it to committee and let's get it enacted.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The time for the first ballot item has expired.

1100

MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Mr Callahan moved private member's notice of motion number 13:

That, in the opinion of this House,

Since the government of Ontario intends to pass Bill 90, An Act to amend the Planning Act and the Municipal Act with respect to Residential Units and Garden Suites; and

Since the effect of this act will be to effectively rezone residential properties and increase density without the protection of the planning process which allows public participation and decision-making by municipal officials who are accountable to the public; and

Since the municipality of the city of Brampton and many other municipalities have already incorporated within their official plans a commitment to the creation of 25% affordable housing pursuant to the policy of the former Liberal government; and

Since the Liberal Party recognizes in these difficult economic times that with the high cost of housing, alternative accommodation of an affordable nature is required, as evidenced by the former Liberal government's direction for "granny flats" and specific levels of affordable housing; and

Since the action of this government in this act is to effectively bypass the local planning process with its public participation, and by edict, extract value from taxpayers by expropriating property without equitable compensation, contrary to every rule of equity; and

Since the Liberal Party supports dwelling units being allowed where zoning is consistent and such uses can be appropriately integrated with the host neighbourhood or in future developments where the integrity of the planning process is maintained and the public is aware of what zoning is in place;

Therefore Bill 90 should be withdrawn or amended by the government of Ontario to ensure the property rights of the citizens of Brampton and other Ontario communities are protected.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin):

Pursuant to standing order 96(c), the member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): It's interesting that the New Democratic Party government, in Bill 90, has simply tried to deal with an issue of search warrants and how to find out whether there are illegal basement apartments by bringing in a bill that in effect is going to rob people who have spent money on probably the largest investment in their lifetime by buying a home in a residential area where single-family dwellings are established.

That establishment and that zoning was brought about as a result of municipal officials and planning officials looking at it and deciding that that's what should be there, that that's the density that should be there, and in fact approving that, and they are accountable to the public; they're accountable every three years by terms of an election.

But that's not good enough for this government. In an effort to try to deal with the issue of illegal basement apartments, because they couldn't deal with it in any other fashion, they decided, "Well, we'll just legalize all of them retroactively." Let me tell you, that flies in the face totally of all planning principles that I've ever learned of. It flies in the face of the principles of democracy which I thought the New Democratic Party stood for. Number one, it takes away from home owners the benefit that they had paid for when they purchased their home. Number two, they had paid taxes on that basis for many, many years. Number three, they thought they were in an area where if the density was to be increased because of a change in the neighbourhood area, this would be done through a proper process where they would have the opportunity to have their say, where people would be able to make decisions in terms of an orderly planning process.

I don't think people understand, and I'm sure many of the members of the government don't understand, that that's how far-reaching this legislation is. If they do understand that, then I really am concerned, because it means that a party such as the New Democratic Party—"democratic" party—would allow for the elimination of these rights of people without any opportunity whatsoever to have a say.

I don't want the people watching this to get the picture wrong. As I said in the resolution, we are in fact in favour of affordable housing to people. But the city of Brampton and I'm sure the region of Peel took up the challenge of the former Liberal government to ensure that in their official plan there would be at least 25% of the housing listed there that would be in the range of affordable housing. We have done that.

We now find that the government of the day, the New Democratic Party government, is now trying to say to us through Bill 90: "In fact, it doesn't matter what's going on in these neighbourhoods, it doesn't matter that

you live in a single-family neighbourhood, that's too bad. We are now going to legalize these basement apartments."

Basement apartments, if they are properly planned for, with all the safeguards that can be installed in terms of fire safety, health safety and so on, are great. But if they're done retroactively, as is the suggestion of this bill and the intent of this bill, then what you've done is you've not only taken a situation of a person's home and increased the density of it by law, contrary to all principles of equity, but you have in fact placed them in the potentiality of danger of fire and so on. I suggest that's not fair and has never been recognized in law as being fair.

It's an attempt by this government to do the usual thing and that usual thing is to try to take people's rights away, purportedly for the benefit of other people who need those rights, without thinking about it.

I urge the Minister of Housing, if she's watching this, that there is another approach. If you wish to have secondary accommodations, be it basement apartments or whatever, in order to protect those people and not allow them to be preyed on perhaps by landlords, the way to do it is to say, "All right, in this area, we propose that there should be basement apartments or multiple dwellings." Let the public have their say, let the zoning process take its place and let anyone who buys in that community know that this is a higher-density area. But don't try to foist it on to a community where this was not the case and where people did not anticipate that to happen.

If that's what's going to happen with Bill 90 being passed, then I suggest to you that the people of Ontario are not safe in any area. They're going to find that this government will impose, retroactively, unfair practices on people in terms of a whole host of things. I suggest to you that's not fair. I have had thousands of people in my community who have signed petitions that were done in cooperation with the municipality. The municipality is gravely concerned about this entire issue.

It's interesting that in response to one of the petitions that were filed, as is the case under the rules, the ministry responded and it responded in a document which was some six pages long. I want to refer you to just a few items in here which are clearly wrong. In paragraph 1, it says, "The apartments-in-houses legislation, Bill 90, alters the zoning authority traditionally available to municipalities through requiring that they permit second units in detached, semi-detached and row houses located in zones which permit residential use." That's right. That's precisely what I've been just saying.

They go on to say: "Such individuals and their municipal representatives have expressed the concern that Bill 90 will have a detrimental impact on the character of neighbourhoods which are now predominantly single family in character. However, research has

suggested that existing neighbourhoods are unlikely to experience significant change as a result of Bill 90." I'd like to see that research. It's probably the first time they've done research on an issue, and I challenge that.

They also say they will not increase neighbourhood population. Well, that flies in the face of logic. If you're retroactively increasing the density of a single-family home, then you are in fact increasing the neighbourhood population.

They say it won't increase service usage, and then they put the word "significantly" after it, because they know that it's going to increase services. It's going to increase the number of people attending school, the number of people using the sewer system and the water system. In fact, they recognize that, because they eliminated from Bill 90 those homes that are on septic tanks. I say to the people of Ontario, if there's any possibility of Bill 90 passing, maybe what you should do is unhook your home from the sewer system and get on a septic tank, because that's the only way you're going to be able to rescue yourself.

1110

They also say that it doesn't result in a decline in neighbouring property values. Well, that may or may not be the case. If you can't see what's happening inside, then perhaps it doesn't impact on the neighbourhood values. But I would suggest that most realtors who are going around and selling homes are going to indicate that this is the case.

They say they've talked to 60 key stakeholders. I'd like to know who they were. They've also said they're placing the question of fire standards under the Ontario Building Code. Obviously, they recognize that there's going to be an increased fire hazard by this taking place.

They tell us that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario has been consulted as part of the process. They don't tell us what the result was of that consultation, and I would suggest that if these people find people whom I know about, they probably had a great deal to say about it and were objecting to it.

They do say under the first paragraph on page 3: "The Land Use Planning for Housing policy statement issued in 1989"—that was the one done by the Liberal government—"required municipalities to amend their official plans and zoning bylaws to allow apartments and houses in appropriate areas. The poor level of compliance...." Well, where's the proof of that? My community certainly complied with it, and I'm sure most communities throughout Ontario complied with it. They use that as a reason for allowing this to take place retroactively.

As I said, I think most good people in this province would agree that we have to have housing for everyone, but it shouldn't be at the expense of people who have

already purchased their homes, believing that the density they were moving into, and paying the high price for that density, would remain what it was. In fact, what this government is attempting to do is simply to take that away, without any compensation whatsoever.

Municipalities themselves are obviously going to have increased demands on their services. School boards: Where is the assistance in the bill in terms of financial assistance to municipalities, or are the taxpayers of that municipality suddenly going to have to bear the burden of that additional cost, without any benefit from Queen's Park?

I suggest to you that, all in all, it really shocks me that a party that prides itself on being democratic would bring in a piece of legislation that is so machiavellian that it is going to impact on the citizens of my riding and certainly other ridings throughout this province. So I would ask all members to support this resolution and send a message to the government that Bill 90 is flawed in that respect and make certain that these changes are in fact taking place.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I want to welcome this opportunity to comment briefly on this resolution that the member for Brampton South has brought to us today for our consideration and comment.

In the briefest of terms, this resolution reads as follows:

"That, in the opinion of this House, since the government of Ontario intends to pass Bill 90, An Act to amend the Planning Act and the Municipal Act with respect to Residential Units and Garden Suites, and

"Since the effect of this act will be to effectively rezone residential properties and increase density without the protection of the planning process which allows public participation and decision-making by municipal officials who are accountable to the public," and therefore this bill "should be withdrawn or amended by the government of Ontario to ensure the property rights of the citizens of Brampton and other Ontario communities are protected."

Having said that, personally, I believe Bill 90 should not be amended; it should be withdrawn entirely. I'm opposed to Bill 90, An Act to amend the Planning Act and the Municipal Act with respect to Residential Units and Garden Suites for many of the same reasons that have been expressed so well to me by many municipalities in my riding of Simcoe East and other municipalities represented by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

The reasons include: It fails to provide adequate legal protection for home owners who need to regain possession of their accessory apartments. It fails to recognize that these apartments may not offer a reasonable quality of life for their occupants or be compatible with their surrounding neighbourhoods. It interferes with

municipal zoning authority and negates official plans and decades of land use planning decisions. It fails to provide municipalities with licensing authority for accessory apartments—now this is Bill 90 I'm talking about—and it fails to consider how municipalities and school boards will pay for the services required by the residents of accessory apartments.

It also fails to consider whether sufficient infrastructure is in place to accommodate the residents of accessory apartments. By that, I'm saying there are many municipalities that have not got the infrastructure to service additional subdivisions they have wanted for years. Now we're saying you can put an apartment in every home in that municipality. I find that unacceptable. It contributes to the absentee landlord syndrome by failing to limit accessory apartments to owner-occupied homes.

These are just a few of the reasons local politicians have given me for their opposition to Bill 90.

On October 30, 1992, the president of AMO said the NDP government is using Bill 90 to rezone neighbourhoods across Ontario without community consultation. The AMO president noted that zoning is a municipal responsibility and that residents understand this and expect their local councillors to account for the zoning decisions that affect them and their neighbourhoods.

Under the Planning Act, 1983, municipalities are required to conduct public meetings on official plan and zoning bylaw amendments, but Bill 90 overrides these requirements and the existing bylaws which have included community consultation.

In conclusion, I support the portion of this resolution that calls for Bill 90 to be withdrawn. I cannot support the amendment of Bill 90 because it is so flawed that it defies any tinkering the NDP could attempt to undertake.

Bill 90 is not an appropriate mechanism to increase the supply of affordable housing. This legislation would impose a province-wide solution to a perceived Toronto problem, and that seems to be the direction this government is taking: What's good for Toronto, it feels, is good for the rest of Ontario. It's not necessarily so.

So this legislation is contrary to existing policy statements. It is inconsistent with the principles of good planning and opposite to the goals and objectives being advocated by the NDP government's own Sewell commission. Bill 90 is an unwarranted and an unwanted intrusion on local government authorities and it eliminates the option of choice for the local government.

I want to thank the member for Brampton South for bringing forward this resolution, because it shows just how flawed and undemocratic Bill 90 really is. This government is not allowing school boards to expand in the additions to schools in rural Ontario. They are not allowing for the septic systems to be put in. They want

the school boards to be all brought together and put in where there are sewers and water.

I hear on the radio this morning that the people in the Brantford area or Welland area are wanting to put in a new school which is a mile from services and allow the septic system to prevail. Is this government's policy the same across the province as it is for one area or the other? Simcoe county board cannot get approval for additions because it's in the rural country.

Anyhow, I wanted to make that known because of the inconsistent policies of this administration, and Bill 90 is just one case in point. So I appreciate the member bringing this forward and allowing the discussion to take place, because Bill 90 is so flawed.

1120

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): I'm very pleased to address this initiative of the government, which is apartments in houses across this province.

First of all, yes, I was part of the ministry which did meet with many people across this province approximately a year ago when the white paper was released. It comes to mind at this point I did meet in the city hall of North Bay with politicians and various community groups there, also in Oshawa and various other places. We talked to the local politicians, we talked to the planners, we talked to community groups, we talked to even real estate people about the aspects and the implications of what this would do.

I'd like to point out a little bit of history here. I believe it was concluded long ago, in agreement between many people in this Legislature, that for affordable housing, as many options as possible is what is needed and, secondly, that communities need to be inclusive: no more of this NIMBY syndrome.

We started discussing this maybe five or six years ago, and I remember the Liberal government back in 1988 putting out a paper and then confirming it in August 1989, a policy statement called Land Use Planning for Housing. The whole purpose of that statement was to provide those options for affordable housing and inclusion in all neighbourhoods of affordable housing.

I remember that much education has gone on since that time. Attitudes have changed. Under the Liberal government, even, the housing advocacy branch was out across this province talking to various people, including the municipal planning committees, and talking about creating access to permanent housing committees and housing help centres.

I hope my colleagues will excuse me when I do say that the Liberal government did provide these initiatives, which were excellent. I remember at a conference in Kitchener, called Developing the Will, Mr Sweeney spoke passionately and Chaviva Hošek, about the need for inclusiveness for affordable housing in all neigh-

bourhoods across this province.

I'd like to turn to some very easy things to understand, and these are the reasons why apartments in houses make sense. I'd like to just list them off to you.

First of all, our construction industry is hurting. It's a key part of our economy. We want construction workers, plumbers, electricians back to work, as I'm sure all of us do.

Secondly, apartments in houses are an effective way of increasing the supply of affordable, lower-rental housing at no cost to the taxpayers. Let's have a hand from the opposition on that one.

Number three, this bill will also generate spinoffs in other industries such as the building materials industry, such as the appliance industry, when people upgrade and bring their apartments up to standard or else put in new ones.

I'd like to mention the creation of garden suites or granny flats, as they may be called. This might in fact help our economy by keeping these people in a much happier setting but also keeping them out of institutional care, which is of course very expensive.

Permitting apartments in houses will also help more people enter the home ownership market, and of course the real estate folks in this province are very pleased about that idea: They want the people to have the confidence to be able to get into home ownership. The builders can even now build in the basics of an apartment into the basement or the attic or wherever, so that when a person buys a new home, they can in fact rent out an apartment within it and therefore be able to afford the mortgage. It may help very many singles or young families.

It will also hopefully help those people who have empty nests; that is, their families have left, they have a larger house, they're seniors, maybe, and they need that extra income from an apartment so they can keep their house. We all know that taxes, all kinds of taxes, municipal taxes are rising and people need to be able to keep their houses.

Also, legalizing apartments will raise the assessed value of these homes and this in turn will mean more revenue for the municipality. We all know that these apartments in many cases are there and the municipality cannot assess them because they are not legal and therefore it cannot collect this extra amount.

The apartments in houses will also mean more efficient and economical use of municipal services. We know the benefits of intensification versus urban sprawl. All you have to do is ask the Sewell commission. People don't want to use up more farm land. We need to use the services that are already there, and in many of our cities, in the core of the cities there is empty space that can be intensified. We can use those schools; we can use that transit. We don't have to use more of

our farm lands and certainly our children can thank us for preserving more farm land.

We want to create vibrant downtown communities. All across this province, we see the inner cores of towns or cities having less people, and the more people you have there, I would like to say, the better it is for those communities.

I also want to mention that upgrading of the standards will certainly help both the tenant and the landlord. We cannot do that unless these units are legalized, and it is very obvious that these units are in fact there.

I want to conclude by saying that this bill is to help individuals. It is not to infringe on property rights; it is to give people rights. Studies have shown that apartments in houses do not lead to a decline in the neighbourhood's property values; neither do group homes—the same Liberal studies have shown from years ago—and neither does non-profit housing. Certainly the Liberal government tried in the past to explain this to municipalities, way back in 1988 and 1989.

This bill is indeed about rights. It is about the right of everyone to inclusion. I ask the members opposite to think of the most vibrant neighbourhoods they know, whether it's in Toronto here or in their own home community. It's where people of all ages, all incomes, know each other, live with each other, care about each other. These are inclusive neighbourhoods, not exclusive neighbourhoods based on property rights.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): As usual, the members opposite talk in terms of inclusion that would give one the impression that in a perfect world we would all live in communes, where we know one another, where we eat with one another, where we play with one another, where we have this wonderful, wonderful fairy-tale-world atmosphere in our residential communities, where there are no problems. It's obvious to me, when I hear the members opposite speak—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, it's not my fault.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Mississauga West has the floor.

Mr Mahoney: It's obvious to me when I hear members opposite speak that many of them have never had to serve on a local municipal council to deal with some of the problems that occur in dealing first hand with the ratepayers. Otherwise, if they did serve on those councils, they have short memories: They have forgotten the problems that occur. You see, the issue here that my good friend from Brampton North raises—

Interjection: South.

Mr Mahoney: South. Whatever; close enough.

The issue here is not whether housing intensification is a good idea. As the former speaker just mentioned,

our government introduced a housing intensification policy. It's not whether or not basement apartments are a particularly good thing. My wife and I, some 24 years ago, set up our nuptial home in a basement apartment. It was wonderful. We didn't go out much in those days, mind you, but it was wonderful. There's nothing wrong with that if it's done appropriately and if it works within the community.

If you've ever had any experience—let me tell you about a place called Talka Village, a residential community of townhouses where people in Mississauga, in Mississauga South, as a matter of fact, came in and bought up these individual units, chopped them up into 8 to 10 bedrooms and put people in there, single mothers and others who couldn't afford to find a place of their own, gouged them, charged them outrageous rents, created parking problems, comings and goings at all hours of the day and night and created serious problems that eroded the foundation of that community. That's not intensification. That's not that airy-fairy world of NDP dogma that would see everyone in a love-in in a community. That's not reality. That's not what our communities are all about.

1130

What my friend Mr Callahan's motion says is that this bill bypasses the municipalities' authority and indeed their responsibility to plan their community in conjunction with the people who live there. That's not NIMBY; that's fairness. A family comes in and invests its life savings and raises its kids in a community only to find out that a number of houses on the street are being turned into multiple-occupancy units. You can't limit it to a basement apartment. We have many examples where people have come in and literally subdivided houses into numerous different flats and turned them into boarding houses. I don't think any of us would want that to happen in our backyard without some ability to control the problems that occur.

I have some experience in these problems. Before I was elected to this august place I was a city councillor in Mississauga. I was also the president of Peel Non-Profit Housing Corp and a member of that board for nine years. I was proud of it then and I still am. I had to deal with the building, by Peel Non-Profit, of a group home for former psychiatric patients in the middle of a community called Sherwood Forest. Sherwood Forest, the name itself, might give you some idea of what that community is like. They are all very large, 3,000-square-foot-plus, single-family homes. You can imagine the outrage when this upstart city councillor who thinks he's going to Queen's Park comes to the community and says, "We're going to put a group home in here for former psychiatric patients." Let me tell you, there were 400 people at the meeting ready to lynch me and anybody else who even thought they were going to do such a thing.

We set up a committee of the community. We set up a steering committee. They met with the proponents. They toured another home in Brampton, as a matter of fact, to see how it worked within the community and they found out that their fears were unfounded. They found out that the people who would be moving into that particular establishment were, but for the grace of God, you and me. They found out that they were simply real people who needed help, who needed an ability to move back within the community, who were not quite ready to go home to the pressures of their particular home, and they needed an adjustment period.

Let me tell you, that was also three months before the provincial election, and going through that process and involving the steering committee and involving the residents, I even won the poll, for goodness' sake, because the people had an opportunity to have their input. The municipality had an opportunity to put forward its concerns. The residents in the community felt that democracy at least prevailed, and if at the end of the day they might have all said, "Well, we'd really rather not have this here," at least they understood what they were getting.

Just as a quick note, a corollary, to this, about one week after that home opened there was a suicide in the home. My phone rang like crazy with people saying, "I told you so." I pointed out to those people that within their own community in the past year there had been four suicides unreported in the media.

The point very simply is that these very real human problems exist in all our communities and we have to deal with them. I know the pain of having to go through that kind of process with a community. What Bill 90 does is it takes away that opportunity.

Members opposite say there's no cost to the taxpayer. There has been no analysis done about the impact on schools. There has been no analysis done of the impact on municipal services, be it sewer and water. There has been no analysis done on safety concerns from the fire department's point of view. There is no option for the municipality to enter and inspect, save and except under the fire act, and they don't want to go around like a jackboot group of people. Even though I know this government likes to operate that way, they don't want to go around like that. They would rather have some tools—

The Deputy Speaker: I find this insulting, I honestly do. Your reference to "jackboot," I don't like that. I find it offensive, and just don't use it.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, with respect, sir, I find that offensive. I don't know where it reads in the act or in any piece of legislation in this Legislature—I'm not calling anyone a liar. If I choose to use a description such as "jackboot," I frankly find it offensive that you would say that.

The Deputy Speaker: I just ask you to be careful with your language.

Mr Mahoney: I find this government acts in that way both in tone and in actions, and Bill 90 takes away from the municipalities the opportunity to have a fair process in place to deal with the concerns and the very legitimate concerns of their constituents.

There will be costs. The municipalities are asking for the authority to license. They're asking for the authority to regulate. They're not saying no to intensification of housing. They're not saying no to basement apartments. They sure as heck are not saying no to non-profit if it's done properly. But they are saying this government has no right to shove regulatory powers down their throat denuding them of their democratic responsibility to work with their community, to make housing intensification work.

Mr Speaker, I'm going to wrap up my comments by telling you, sir, that I'm extremely disappointed at the interruptions that occurred from the Chair.

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): I would hope that through this debate the government would reconsider Bill 90 and consider withdrawing it or changing it.

I must say that I suspect, again, in the first instance that Bill 90 was brought forward at a time when there was a certain need. It was brought forward, perhaps, with good intentions. It was brought forward at a time when the vacancy rate here in Metropolitan Toronto, for example, was about 0%, but those times have changed. The vacancy rate today, as we speak, is approaching 2.5%.

I was in Thorold last week and I was told that in the Niagara area the vacancy rate is closer to 7%. I'm told that the vacancy rate in the city of London approaches 5%. Basically, the conditions that we faced back when this bill was brought forward have changed considerably. I think it should be revisited.

I'm interested in that I've heard that there has been consultation. I've heard that the stakeholders have been approached and that there's agreement with regard to the terms of Bill 90. I'd love to know where that agreement comes from, because I have attended a number of meetings through the years on this very topic and recently over the past year or so when it became the intent of the government to introduce Bill 90. I've talked to a number of the mayors and I've been in meetings where many of the mayors of many of the municipalities, particularly from southern Ontario, were in attendance. I can say that almost without exception there is total opposition to Bill 90; almost without exception.

The municipalities are expressing many concerns. AMO itself, as a representative of the municipalities, is expressing these concerns. Let's not kid ourselves that everybody's in agreement with Bill 90. Let's not kid

on the street when this is allowed, the number of cars that are parked on the street, the additional services that are required in terms of sewer and water, recreation and the multiplicity of services that local municipalities provide, the local municipality feels set upon by the government legislation, even though there has been consultation and a white paper put out. The local individuals feel, I think, that they are being betrayed by some level of government, by somebody out there who has changed the rules after they have made their purchases.

I think it boils down to—and this is what the member is trying to get at—two issues: the individual and the rights of that individual to live in a neighbourhood that the individual has chosen and, second, the issue of the local municipality and its jurisdiction. Provincial governments over the years—and certainly this government has been doing so—have unloaded some of the responsibilities to local municipalities. They complained to the Conservatives when they were in power, they complained to the Liberals when we were in power and they complain to the NDP today. They're almost at the end of their rope in terms of provincial governments putting new responsibilities on local municipalities and of course interfering within the sole jurisdiction of those municipalities.

There are times when the province has to set out broad guidelines. I think most people would accept that. I certainly accept it. I've seen it in terms of agricultural land and the province making its declarations, and there are a number of other declarations of provincial interest that are applied either to specific neighbourhoods or to policies as a whole. I support the province trying to reach those particular goals.

Where I think the problem exists is when the province tries to get into the detailed responsibilities of the local municipality. I would hope there would be some considerable support for the member for Brampton. He hasn't called for the withdrawal of the bill, as many people, I think, probably would. I think he's realistic enough to see that the government is going to proceed with its bill. He has offered, I think, a reasonable and moderate alternative for the government to consider. I hope that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and members on all sides of the House will see fit to support this particular initiative. I commend the member for Brampton, Mr Callahan, for doing so.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I'd like to thank the member for bringing up these important issues, but also to remind him of the very fact that the initiatives that he's talking about, brought forward by the previous Liberal government, of which he was a part, did experience some difficulties.

As the member from Brampton no doubt knows, the Liberal government supported apartments in houses. In fact they asked municipalities to plan for those apart-

ments. They included zoning to allow apartments in houses as a requirement under their land use planning for housing policy statement.

Specifically, in 1989 there was a requirement that municipalities amend their official plans to designate areas where apartments in houses would be permitted. Several municipalities responded positively, but unfortunately the overall response was very disappointing.

Out of 100 priority area municipalities, 60 have adopted the official plan policies. The Ministry of Housing looked at 32 of those plans to see how well they complied and only 17—17 out of 100—contained provisions that established areas of specific criteria for the creation of apartments in houses, and most of those 17 plans don't fully comply with the Liberals' housing policy statement.

My friend would have us go back to a Liberal status that didn't work. It wasn't effective. Standards like those mean fewer potential apartments in houses and, in some cases, also mean that apartments are actually excluded in neighbourhoods where they have been theoretically permitted.

I have to ask, why is the housing policy statement of the previous government being resurrected when it didn't do what it was set out to do? What did it accomplish for the 100,000 households with little or no rights? Obviously not very much. That's one of the reasons this government has moved ahead with Bill 90. We don't want to say: "We think apartments in houses are a good idea. Why don't you people go and do something about it?"

That time has come and it has gone and now we have to produce some results about affordable housing, results in regard to property owners having rights about their own property, results about safety and security. We have to act to ensure that this housing, which already exists, meets reasonable standards of health and safety and that the municipalities have the power to enforce those standards.

Under this legislation, municipalities will retain a high degree of control over the physical character of their neighbourhoods, including aspects such as front-yard setbacks, building heights, densities, driveway widths.

My friend from Mississauga West talks about some homes that are overcrowded with substandard accommodation. That's because of the present legislation, not what we're proposing. We're trying to improve that situation. We're trying to rectify the very things that my friend from Mississauga West spoke of.

My friend from Don Mills represents a community which has one of the highest levels of density in all of Ontario. In fact, as he well knows, that area he represents has a high proportion, a high density of number of units per acre, units that are inhabited by very small

numbers of families, very small family sizes. Legislation will strengthen municipal enforcement, and far from imposing additional burdens on municipal services, apartments in houses should mean more full use of existing services, therefore services that are more cost-effective.

Studies have shown that both units in a converted house, as in Don Mills, tend to be occupied by smaller-than-average households, so it's unlikely that the total household in a converted house will be substantially bigger than the household in an unconverted house.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Brampton South, you have two minutes.

Mr Callahan: It's become more and more obvious to me that the members of the government who have spoken on this motion don't understand it. I must say that's frightening, because they in fact are the people who bring forward legislation and they don't know what it's about.

What I'm talking about is the taking of value, in other words, the retroactive legalization of existing basement apartments. I'm not talking about intensification.

I support fully the intensification process the Liberal government brought in. But I do not believe that you go into somebody's house—this is the equivalent analogy—and you say: "The state now owns your house. We're taking it. We're not giving you any compensation whatsoever for it." In fact, that's what you're doing.

I have no objection if the municipality wants to establish an area for residential apartments. I think that's great. I think what that does is create further housing for people who need it. What I'm saying to you is, don't try through legislation to steal from the people of Ontario who have invested their good, hard-earned money in buying a house after the fact, and that's what you people keep doing.

The people of Ontario have to be very frightened by the fact that anything they've decided today and applied their mind to it or purchased or whatever, the government, the NDP government, can take it away like that. "We'll just legislate it retroactively."

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): That's not true.

Mr Callahan: Well, that's precisely what you're doing. You are taking away from these people value and you're giving them nothing in return. You have allowed municipalities to collect taxes on the basis of a single-family residence for ages, or since the building was built, and yet what you're doing now, in one fell swoop by Bill 90, is you're in fact taking away that value from these people and you're not giving them one cent for it. It's contrary to all the principles of equity and justice.

I urge you to support this motion.

The Deputy Speaker: The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

LAND LEASE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES TERRAINS À BAIL

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We will deal first with ballot item number 13 standing in the name of Mr Wessenger. If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Mr Wessenger has moved second reading of Bill 21, An Act to amend certain Acts with respect to Land Leases. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Pursuant to standing order 96(k), the bill is referred to the committee of the whole House.

Mr Paul Wessenger (Simcoe Centre): Mr Speaker, I would request that it be referred to the standing committee on general government.

The Deputy Speaker: Shall this bill be referred to the standing committee on general government? Agreed.

A majority of the House being in agreement with the request of the member, this bill will stand referred to the standing committee on general government.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We will now deal with ballot item number 14 standing in the name of Mr Callahan. If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Mr Callahan moves resolution number 14. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1203 to 1208.

The Deputy Speaker: Please take your seats.

Mr Callahan has moved private member's notice of motion number 13. All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until your names are called.

Ayes

Bradley, Brown, Callahan, Curling, Eddy, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kwinter, Marland, Miclash, Poirier, Stockwell, Villeneuve.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until your names are called.

J'ai aussi appris que les deux ministres s'étaient trouvé une bonne raison de ne pas assister au congrès de l'ACFO en fin de semaine dernière.

Je voudrais dire au gouvernement que les francophones de l'Ontario ne sont pas des dupes. Ils savent que le gouvernement s'est encore trouvé une raison de retarder tout progrès dans le dossier des collèges. Il ne faut pas s'étonner que les Franco-Ontariens et les Franco-Ontariennes aient totalement perdu confiance en ce gouvernement.

Le lendemain des compressions budgétaires, je participais au petit déjeuner postbudgétaire libéral. Si je me fie aux propos dans cette réunion et ailleurs, la population franco-ontarienne est furieuse contre ce gouvernement. On a beaucoup parlé de l'incompétence du gouvernement, des promesses non tenues, notamment dans le domaine de l'éducation, et de la situation difficile des aînés francophones.

Lisez les comptes rendus du congrès de l'ACFO de la fin de semaine dernière, c'est la même chose. Il y a encore un fort sentiment de colère et de crainte qui se dégage. Beaucoup de francophones se demandent jusqu'où le gouvernement est capable de se rendre, et ils ont très peur.

RACE RELATIONS

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): It is time for all of us in this House to end the silence and let the racist Heritage Front know that we have heard their views and that we reject them completely. It is time to stop the spreading of hate messages.

In Kitchener-Waterloo, the white supremacists are creating a climate of fear and intimidation as they boldly wander the downtown streets, harass local merchants, hurl racial slurs, threaten violence and death, and frighten people just by being there. They are aiming their message of hatred, terror and violence at our young people, hoping to attract those who are disaffected, confused and rebellious. In doing so, they have boldly sent recruiting literature to the schools in the region of Waterloo, as well as setting up a phone line.

The people in my community are angry and concerned and they are going to get actively involved in eliminating the growing intolerance. Although freedom of speech is a right to be defended fiercely, it cannot be extended to cover the attempts by these white supremacists to spread their message. Their message of hatred, terror and violence has a long and tragic history, and it must be opposed with all the rigour of the law that our society can muster.

I encourage this government, I encourage each member of this House, to show leadership and act now to stop the spread of violence, hatred and intolerance.

ANCASTER BICENTENNIAL

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): The year 1993 marks the bicentennial of the town of Ancaster.

Over 200 years ago, Messrs James Wilson and Richard Beasley built a mill on the Ancaster Creek and a thriving community began to grow. Known as Wilson's Mills, it included a blacksmith, a cooper, a tavern for refreshment and a boardinghouse for transient workers. This formed the nucleus of the new village.

It was in 1793 that John Graves Simcoe surveyed and confirmed that district number 8 was to become the township of Ancaster. By 1800, it was the third most important settlement in Upper Canada. Owing to abundant water power, industry came and several factories made a variety of commodities: carriages, farm implements and lumber mills. The healthy air brought many early doctors and their patients to recover from the unhealthy area below the mountain. Some of these new arrivals brought education, wealth and an infusion of new ideas to the area.

During the War of 1812, Ancaster was an important military town because the Governor's Road was a direct link with the new settlements to the west.

By the 1860s, agriculture was still of prime importance and farms flourished. Scottish stonemasons and Irish carpenters brought their skills to Ancaster, and the old town hall, built in 1872, is a testament to their artistic workmanship.

Today, Ancaster stands majestically on top of the escarpment, overlooking the city of Hamilton, boasting a perfect blend of elegant estates of yesteryear and beautifully designed homes of the 1990s.

Happy 200th birthday, Ancaster.

ONTARIO FILM REVIEW BOARD

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): The NDP government is once again abandoning the women of this province.

This week, the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations attempted to have Wendy Priesnitz appointed vice-chair of the Ontario Film Review Board.

Wendy Priesnitz recently was the centre of controversy when she tried to weaken OFRB guidelines protecting women against violence, degradation and humiliation. It is reprehensible that the minister would consider promoting Ms Priesnitz to vice-chair of the board when this controversy has still not been resolved. Several groups, including the Coalition for the Safety of Our Daughters, have strongly opposed Ms Priesnitz's appointment.

The ministry has misled us by stating that a vacancy exists on the OFRB. In fact, the board currently has five vice-chairs and has never operated with more than that number.

We are concerned that Ms Priesnitz lacks the experience to take a leadership role on the board. In fact, the majority of her one-year term on the board was spent on personal business in Romania, leaving her with only a few scant months of experience.

The minister consistently claims in this House that

she must remain independent of the OFRB, yet the minister's office personally spent several hours coaching Ms Priesnitz prior to her scheduled appearance before the standing committee on government agencies. It's obvious that the minister is aware of the difficulties in getting Ms Priesnitz's appointment ratified and is doing her best to smooth the way.

Ms Priesnitz failed to appear before the committee this morning when her appointment was to have been reviewed. Let's hope the minister has second thoughts about this ill-advised appointment.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I direct this statement to the Minister of Natural Resources. The minister recently announced that his government will be shifting the total cost of reforestation on to the private sector. The forest industry will be assuming the cost of a program that cost \$140 million in 1991.

In this year's budget, this sector was hit with a \$25-million tax hit through the increased stumpage fees and a new corporate minimum tax. Ontario's forest industry is taking so many tax bites from this government that it is becoming impossible to do business in this province.

Marie Rauter, president of the Ontario Forest Industries Association, has provided me with the following quotation:

"We are supportive of negotiating a new contract for reforestation, but we need to know what is negotiable. We need the assurance that we will have harvest rights to the resources we grow."

As the Minister of Natural Resources negotiates this reforestation policy, I urge him to take heed of the industry's message. I ask the minister to make reforestation an investment for industry and not just another tax grab.

STANISLAVA MARKOVICH

Mr George Dadamo (Windsor-Sandwich): Mr Speaker, June, as you know, is Seniors' Month, and we are for ever grateful and indeed fortunate to be among people who love and care for their neighbours and their friends.

Mr Speaker, you greeted, as I did, the recipients of the 1993 Senior Achievement Award to Queen's Park just last week and no doubt were equally impressed with the calibre of seniors we have in the province of Ontario.

There were well over 400 nominations submitted to government, highlighting the involvement of all nominees, and 19 were chosen, but they are all to be commended for their work and their generosity.

Windsor has many such individuals, but Stanislava Markovich of Pellissier Street is remarkable. After spending an hour speaking with her, I can truly appreciate this award bestowed upon her.

Let me give some highlights on the caring of Mrs Markovich. Twenty-five years ago, the dream of the Serbian Heritage Women's Society was to create the first Serbian Heritage Museum in North America. In 1987, the dream was realized, and ever since, Stanislava Markovich, a founding member of that group, has devoted her entire retirement to the voluntary, full-time operation of that museum.

Mrs Markovich is a member of the Windsor Media Council, the Circle of Serbian Sisters, the Windsor Symphony and a retired librarians' group. She uses her contacts with these groups and others to promote the activities of the museum in preserving Serbian history and culture.

This is our way of showing respect and thanks to the seniors in Ontario for their love and respect of this province.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES SOCIAL CONTRACT

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): In March of this year, my government announced the details of a plan to control the provincial deficit. Our projections indicated that if we did not act, the provincial deficit would rise out of control. By 1996, interest payments on the debt to creditors could constitute the Ontario government's single biggest expenditure program, bigger than spending on hospitals or on education. The reality is that interest payments would soon cut into our budgets for investments in jobs and in essential services such as health and education.

The plan the government announced in March will hold the deficit for this year at approximately \$9.2 billion. It will also save approximately \$5 billion in interest payments over the next three years.

The plan we proposed to achieve this saving involves three components. The objective was that all sectors of society should contribute to dealing with our common problem and that those who earn the most should contribute the most.

First, the government looked to its own expenditures and cut \$4 billion from various programs and ministries. The second component of the plan was contained in the budget, which introduced tax increases and other revenue measures totalling about \$2 billion. To achieve the remaining \$2 billion, the government invited employers and unions in the public sector to negotiate a new social contract. The objective was to enable representatives of the province's 950,000 broader public sector workers to discuss and negotiate ways of making a broad range of public services more efficient and more affordable for the taxpayers of Ontario.

Over a period of eight weeks, the representatives of public sector unions, employers and the government made some progress, but the talks broke down last

Thursday night when the unions walked out.

The framework agreement that was tabled by the government towards the end of the negotiations included, among other things:

—Generous provisions for job security, including an assurance that every worker affected by the abolition of a position would have a priority for another job with the same public sector employer, or with employers in the same industry, or within the same region.

—For those affected by layoffs, we proposed a job security fund of \$300 million to top up their UIC benefits to 95% of take-home pay for a year, or to be used to extend notice periods and allow time for retraining.

—Employees making less than \$30,000 would be exempt from measures that affect compensation.

—The most significant savings would be realized through a system of unpaid leaves of absence, administered in such a way as to protect overall service delivery and to accommodate the preferences of individual workers.

These and other components of the social contract framework agreement constitute the basis for the plan the government will implement to achieve its \$2-billion target. The basic principle of our approach remains the same: to reduce the cost of services while preserving jobs and services.

The government will introduce legislation in the Legislature on Monday to enable implementation of the key elements of the framework agreement negotiated at the social contract table, including: a job security fund; redeployment, training and adjustment assistance for employees subject to layoffs; compensation savings; efficiency in productivity savings; a low-income cutoff, and no effect on pay equity provisions.

The process laid out in the legislation will proceed as follows:

The reduction in transfer payments will begin in July.

Participants at previous social contract sectoral table negotiations will be encouraged to return to sector-by-sector negotiations. These are province-wide public service unions and associations representing hospitals, municipalities and other groups of employers. Many have already indicated their willingness to resume sectoral negotiations and their strong preference for an approach that respects the diversity of the public sector.

They will be asked to meet the same sectoral targets that had been set at the social contract table. The purpose of the negotiations will be for each sector to arrive at the best solution to achieving its target, while preserving as many jobs and services as possible.

Local parties, including individual municipalities, hospitals, and their employees, will also be permitted to negotiate local bilateral agreements within the same

general principles as applied in the sectoral negotiations. The deadline for all negotiations will be August 1, 1993.

1350

The legislation will introduce a fail-safe provision in the event that fiscal targets have not been met through negotiation at the sectoral or local levels. These fail-safe mechanisms will come into effect on August 1, 1993.

These measures will ensure that fiscal targets are met.

The net result will be that by August 1, 1993, we will have assured a savings in public sector compensation of \$2 billion. A further result is that the government, with public sector workers and employers, will have implemented many of the measures devised at the social contract table. We will also have made further progress in making government services more affordable and more efficient. Job security will be enhanced as well, without preventing employers from carrying out necessary changes.

There is no easy way to deal with this challenge. The plan we've implemented since March is tough and practical. It will be effective in controlling the deficit. Beyond that, it represents a balanced approach in that it achieves our target of holding the deficit below \$10 billion through a variety of expenditure cuts, tax measures and cuts in public sector compensation. It is a conscientious approach in that it protects those less able to bear the burden and seeks to reduce costs in ways that preserve jobs and services to the public.

I want to make it clear, and I've discussed this with the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the third party, that members of the Legislature and senior non-unionized employees of the government are all covered by this approach as well.

I'm inviting our own employees to join us as soon as possible in these negotiations. There's no need for delay, as we all know the need for results that will protect jobs and services. We're also prepared to work with our partners at the sector tables, within the legislative framework we're establishing.

PORTUGUESE COMMUNITY

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister of Citizenship):

Today I am pleased to rise on behalf of the government to pay tribute to the men and women of Portuguese origin who have contributed so much to the growth and development of Canada.

Tomorrow, June 10, is National Day of Portugal. It is also the Day of Camões, on which the life of Portugal's greatest poet, Luis de Camões, is celebrated.

This year is particularly significant for the Portuguese Canadian community: 1993 marks the 40th anniversary of the first wave of Portuguese immigrants to Canada. In 1953, the first group of workers arrived from the mainland, the Madeiras and the Azores, landing in Halifax. They did so under an agreement struck between

Canada and Portugal. The agreement was labelled by both governments as "trial movements."

The emigrants were given instruction manuals which stated in part: "You are part of an emigration trial movement which is the first attempt to settle large numbers of Portuguese people in Canada.... Don't forget, therefore, that the future of many Portuguese who stay behind waiting for the opportunity given to you now, is dependent on your honesty, your hard work and your capacity to succeed."

It should also be noted that one of the main criteria for determining who would be immigrants were their hardened hands.

The Portuguese community in Ontario is today a thriving, vibrant community of over 350,000, with the largest concentration living in Toronto. Many of the succeeding generations since the pioneers are now making their mark in the professions, business and labour, whether as doctors, lawyers, dentists, teachers or business leaders.

Earlier this year, the Portuguese community established the Portuguese Canadian National Congress, which will in part act as a national voice for the Portuguese community.

I'm pleased to recognize members of the Portuguese community who are in the gallery today. They are the consul general of Portugal, Dr José Viegas; the vice-consul, Mr Ferreyra; the president of the Portuguese Canadian National Congress, Dr Tomás Ferreira; the president of Canada Portugal, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr Carlos de Castro; the president of the Alliance of Portuguese Clubs and Associations, Dr Manuel Carvalho; the vice-president, Ontario division, Portuguese Canadian National Congress, Ms Ida de Jesus.

Tomorrow evening, the Premier will honour, on behalf of the government and people of Ontario, many of the original immigrants, the pioneers from Portugal. It's one way of saying to the community as a whole, and the individuals specifically, that the contributions which you have made to Ontario and which you continue to make by your hard work, and indeed your hardened hands and your new professionalism, is highly valued. Thank you for helping to make Ontario a better place to live. Obrigada.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I am a little bit surprised but none the less rather relieved to find that the Premier appears to be taking some very specific steps to resolving what has become a totally chaotic situation. My greatest concern as I approached today was that we would have yet another delay and that that delay would extend the chaos and the uncertainty which this province has been experiencing for the last eight weeks. I think the Premier may be well aware,

as I am, that none of us has ever before experienced the level of frustration and uncertainty and anxiety that people of this province have been expressing over the course of the last weeks. It was absolutely essential that the Premier take some action.

Let me tell you what we agree with in this. We agree that the government's budget targets must be met, and we have always taken that position. We have never argued with the need for restraint, although we have expressed and will continue to express our frustration that two and a half years of financial mismanagement have brought us to the point where the government has been so desperately looking to take back what it so freely gave away in the first year of this government. We are tremendously frustrated that this government waited so long to deal with this province.

But we do believe the public sector employers and employees must do their part, as those in the private sector have, and in fact we further believe the public sector employers and employees have understood this and are ready to do their part and that this is evident in the efforts that have already been made to bring about cost reductions and in fact to negotiate wage freezes.

We support the search for ways to make the reductions in costs that this government is seeking without layoffs and without cuts in essential services, and we have hoped that those ways could be found. Because of that, we have argued consistently for a reopening of local negotiations or provincial negotiations, whatever is the forum in which collective bargaining agreements are normally reached, as being the only way in which it would be possible to meet financial targets that the government has set without completely abandoning the collective bargaining process.

I continue to believe and I am, I think the word may be, "gratified" that the Premier has finally come to understand, as the municipalities have said and as we have consistently argued, as the record will show, from even before the social contract talks were opened, that the only way in which a good resolution of the need to find cost reductions could be found was at a local level and that it was going to be impossible to deal with the need for reductions with broad-brush solutions.

That is why we have continued to argue, although we recognized that every passing day was making our solution more difficult to implement, that it was only through the operation, again, of the local negotiation or provincial negotiation, as the case may be, that the best solutions could be found.

Therefore, we welcome that in the Premier's statement today there are provisions made to allow for those local negotiations to take place, or provincial negotiations if that is the customary collective bargaining forum. We truly believe that better resolutions of the need to reduce costs can be found in this process than in the kind of discussions that have been taking place in

the social contract talks that we believe were doomed to fail from the beginning.

We do not believe that the government's final offer, which apparently is still to be incorporated in legislation, is workable. I can assure the Premier that we will have some very specific questions about what has been proposed in the government's final offer, what the implications of those proposals will be, and I am sure that everyone in the public sector who will be affected by the statement he has made today and by the legislation to be presented will have similar questions.

1400

I do not believe that over the course of the negotiations the government negotiators have fully understood the implications of their proposals across all of those different sectors and all of those 9,000 individual collective agreements that are going to be affected. We are going to pose those questions today, after what has been a very initial examination of the Premier's statement, and we are going to trust that when he talks about the legislation he will introduce, if local resolution is reached that is a better resolution and is agreed to by the bargaining parties, that those jurisdictions will be exempt from any broad-brush solutions that the government may impose.

We today wish success to the local and provincial negotiation process. We need to put uncertainty, anxiety and instability behind us in this province so this government can begin to concentrate some of its energies on getting this province and its people back to work.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): If only we'd listened to the Liberals the last few years, we'd have been all right.

Let me first of all comment on a few of the expressions of the Premier. He must be embarrassed. I remember him attacking Premier Peterson, quite correctly, for all these weasel words when he was in opposition. "Compensation savings": Tell us what it is—a 5% rollback. That's what you're talking about, compensation savings. Things like "fail-safe mechanisms": That's reopening the contracts and stripping out everything that's been bargained for. At least be honest and tell the people what it is that you're talking about.

Now, Premier, listen. We have told you that your contract talks could not possibly succeed. The union leaders had no chance with credibility to keep their jobs and negotiate rolling back contracts unless three commonsense things were put on the table, unless you were firm on three areas. One, the amount: \$2 billion. We think you're firm today; I hope you are, or they won't work. Secondly, the deadline. Now you're telling us August 1. July 1 the payments come off; if you're firm on that and they understand that, you'll have some chance of success. On Monday we'll get the "what if"—what if the talks aren't successful: the legislation, the hammer that you plan to bring in.

Quite frankly, now the talks have a chance to succeed. Obviously I think they can succeed in that climate. I never thought they could before. I told you that and you all said I was wet, but I think I've been proven right.

Here's the problem. You see, for this year for municipalities, for all those whose fiscal year started January 1, the train has left the station. Shutting down hospitals for weeks or months on end, shutting down schools, people losing jobs, massive layoffs, chaos out there, another two months of chaos with the falling dollar, with interest rates, all of these things that are being affected: This is part of the problem because you've been so late in bringing the talks and putting them in the right perspective.

Premier, this can work, but I think you've got to be honest now and say that the three-year program is going to have to start on August 1. You can't go to municipalities and ask them to cut the equivalent of 10% or 12% out because their fiscal year is a half or two thirds over by the time they get to implement it. That is absolute nonsense and will create chaos out there that is not necessary at all. There are solutions even today.

Admit that you missed the significant portion of this year and that the three-year program should start August 1, and that's the only way you're going to be able to do it without absolute chaos out there and more uncertainty. Secondly, start the clock ticking on attrition. Announce today that there is a hiring freeze. Pull that Job Mart off there, pull the advertisement out of the pages. The job freeze starts today so the attrition clock can start ticking and you can take advantage of that over the next three years. Institute a wage freeze at the same time so you stop the nonsense like the Ontario Housing Corp—condoned, supported, encouraged by your Minister of Housing: Grab your 5% now and then when it's rolled back you'll break even. That nonsense has to stop, and it's going on as we speak right here in the chamber. So start that moving.

Empower the union members, the civil servants, the extended public sector—not the union leaders; the members who have come up with more ideas on how to save money than you yourself have.

Finally, look at your own spending. We can still meet this year's deficit targets. We could probably exceed them if you'd listen to some of the spending controls. The joke of your statement is that you say, "The government looked to its own expenditures and cut \$4 billion from...programs and ministries." Pages 92-93 of the budget show you hiked your own spending over \$2 billion. The only thing that's certain now is that taxpayers are hit with \$2 billion and the transfer partners now are going to be hit with \$2 billion. So live up to your own commitment, start cutting back your own expenditures, initiate some of these moves and we can get back on track today.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Before proceeding, I would invite all members to welcome to the chamber a colleague of mine, the Honourable David Carter, the Speaker of the Legislature of Alberta, and he is with his wife. Welcome to our assembly.

BRIDGE ACCIDENT

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Mr Speaker, I'd like to ask the House for unanimous consent, perhaps, to observe a moment's silence for the four workers who were killed yesterday in the unfortunate incident at the Garden City Skyway bridge in St Catharines.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Do we have unanimous consent? Agreed. I would ask all members, and indeed our visitors in the gallery, if you would rise, please, and observe a moment of silence.

The House observed a moment's silence.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I have a number of questions which I want to pose to the Premier on the statement that he's just made. He will recognize, of course, that in the few moments that we've had to digest the statement, there will be a number of questions about its implications which we have only begun to discover. I'd like to begin with one which is perhaps the most obvious.

The Premier has indicated very clearly that the measures that will be expected to be negotiated, whether it's sectoral or local levels, will have to ensure that the government's fiscal targets are met. He says further that the net result of any negotiations that are carried on will be that by August 1, 1993, we will have an assured savings in public sector compensation of \$2 billion. I suggest to the Premier that it is not yet clear that the fiscal targets are well established. We are halfway through the budget year for many of the transfer partners. I would ask him whether or not he is expecting that the full 5% financial target which this government has established is going to have to be achieved within the current fiscal or contract year on the part of all of those negotiating new contracts.

1410

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): The \$2-billion target which the government has set out is to be achieved in our fiscal year. Obviously those are the targets that are set out in our fiscal year and there are partners who have different fiscal years than we do. We all understand that, for example, the municipalities' dates end at the end of December. So, obviously there's room for discussion, and in fact already at the municipal table there have been extensive discussions. I was discussing it, in fact, even today with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

I appreciated the tone and substance of the response from the Leader of the Opposition today, and would say to her that obviously we're going to be discussing with our partners how we can effect these changes while ensuring services and while ensuring jobs for people. That's exactly the reason why we think there needs to be a process of sectoral and local discussions and also ways for people to discuss some of these issues directly with the government.

Mrs McLeod: In expressing my very clear sense that this chaos has to be brought to some resolution, I wouldn't want the Premier to mistake the fact that I have some very grave concerns and reservations about some of the directions that the government has taken and is likely to continue to take. I've made it very clear that I have very real concerns about the broad-brush final offer that the government put on the table, so it causes me concern, again, to see that that same last offer is likely to be incorporated into legislation. Again, I will be raising concerns about the implication of those proposals for the various sectors. I truly believe it is not possible to implement those proposals.

It therefore leads me to a question about what the Premier refers to simply in his statement as "fail-safe provisions." I would ask you what the fail-safe provision is likely to be. I would ask you, secondly, whether or not the fail-safe provision is likely to be the government's last offer. And I would ask you, finally, what the fail-safe provision does to good-faith bargaining that is now expected to take place.

Hon Mr Rae: That's the whole point. I will say to the honourable member, without being flip at all, that in terms of the details of that, she will have to wait for the legislation on Monday. But I would say to her that the purpose of it is precisely to ensure the need for good-faith bargaining, which we've tried to ensure all the way through, and that's been the whole purpose of what we're about. At the same time, I would say—

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): You interfered in collective bargaining in a way that is unheard of in this province.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Rae: I'm being heckled, Mr Speaker, unmercifully by the member from Oriole, who's accusing us of something. I would say to her—I think I can withstand the attack. Somehow I feel that way. But I would say to her that, while I answer the Leader of the Opposition and try to deal with her directly, her leader is saying: "Yes, meet the targets. Yes, bargain in good faith. Yes, provide for local solutions." I hope she would also agree with me that we also want to avoid the pain of layoffs being exacted on the most vulnerable and those whose jobs need to be protected and who may not have a union at all, who may not have anyone bargaining for them at all. Therefore, there has to be some way of ensuring that when we reach the August 1

date, the legislation is sensitive to all of those factors, as well as, obviously, the need to respect bargaining.

We have a responsibility to respect services, we have a responsibility to deal with the problems of people who don't have a bargaining agent and who don't have a union, and we need to find a balance. That's precisely what the province is doing, and we are doing it in response to requests from employees. We're doing it in response to requests from many employers—

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —who have also said they believe in flexibility; they also believe in the need for firmness in meeting the financial targets. That's precisely the direction that the government is taking, and I think it's a wise course for the province.

Mrs McLeod: The Premier has on occasion been known to be somewhat flip when we have in fact been deeply concerned about an issue. He has more often, over the course of the last eight weeks, simply been evasive. I trust that the Premier will now recognize that we have been raising day after day what we believe to be legitimate and important questions about the directions that his government has been taking and about proposals that they have been putting on the table in the name of negotiation towards resolution. We are going to now re-raise those questions, Premier, because they still demand answers.

One of the questions which we raised last week, which clearly is not addressed by anything which is in your statement today but which begs an answer, is: As you say that transfer payments will start to be cut as of July 1, how are you going to deal with the fact that you pay no transfer payments to the Metropolitan Toronto school boards, to the Ottawa school boards, that Hydro is not a recipient of transfer payments—it's totally independent from the government—that the municipal electric utilities that are also involved in this receive no money from the government? How are you now going to expect those boards and utilities to contribute to your financial reductions?

Hon Mr Rae: It's important for the member to know and I'll answer again. I'm not being evasive when I say that obviously the legislation will have to address the question of some of the issues of equity across the whole of the public sector, but we want to do it in a way that's not going to be so intrusive as to prevent local partners and local parties from reaching solutions.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I would suggest that I am also being consistent when I ended my response to the Premier's statement by saying that it is important for us to resolve this chaotic situation in order to be able to move on and concentrate energies on getting people working again. It is therefore

consistent that every day I have asked a question about jobs and employment in this province, and in consistency I will do so again.

My question is to the Premier. Premier, your government has always held up the \$25-million Jobs Ontario Youth program as being the centrepiece of its youth initiatives. We have said that this is not enough to deal with the crisis that is facing our young people, although we have also said that we felt it was at least going partway. We have criticized your government on the program because it has been a repackaging of existing program dollars and there is really only \$14 million in new jobs funding under Jobs Ontario Youth.

Now we have learned that that entire \$14 million is only available to youth in selected communities in Ontario. If you do not live in Metropolitan Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton or Windsor, there are no jobs available to you under this program. I ask you, on what basis is the Jobs Ontario Youth funding targeted only to Metro, Ottawa, Hamilton and Windsor?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'm going to allow the Minister of Education and Training to answer that question.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I think the Leader of the Opposition will remember that last year a similar type of allocation was made under the Jobs Ontario Youth program, and the reason that moneys are targeted to those particular communities is primarily because of the high unemployment rate among youth, the particular difficulty among racial minority youth in those communities. Obviously we're trying to target particular problems that are larger in those communities than in other communities across the province.

Mrs McLeod: If I heard the minister correctly, he is saying that the problem of youth unemployment is more severe in some communities than it is in others. I would indeed tell the minister that all this does is show that this government is completely out of touch with the crisis that is faced by young people right across this province.

Jobs Ontario Youth is your only new initiative in the area of youth programs and it does not live up to its name of being a provincial program. I would tell you that youth unemployment is a crisis in Sudbury and Niagara Falls and Sarnia and London and Kitchener-Waterloo and Brantford and Sault Ste Marie and Belleville, and I will just tell you the statistics.

Youth unemployment in northeast Ontario 28.5%; in the northwest 25.2%; in the Niagara region 22.5%; in Peterborough-Bellefonte 26.3%, and you have decided that the young people of these communities do not deserve Jobs Ontario assistance. How did you decide that Windsor would receive jobs but not Sudbury, where youth unemployment is a severe problem, and not St

Catharines and not Peterborough and not Belleville?

Hon Mr Cooke: The Leader of the Opposition can use all the rhetoric that she wants to use, but the fact of the matter is that there's \$180 million being spent on job creation programs for young people in this province. There's a significant amount of the Jobs Ontario Training money going to young people in the province. She's talking about \$14 million out of \$180 million plus that is targeted to particular communities.

It's absolutely ridiculous, unfair and inaccurate for her to say that we don't care about young people in other communities across the province. We're putting more money into job creation for young people in this province than has ever taken place in the history of this province. So no matter how much rhetoric she wants to use, the fact of the matter is this government is doing more than has ever been done before or was ever contemplated by that party over there.

1420

Mrs McLeod: This minister began his first response by saying that the Jobs Ontario Youth program was targeted to communities where there was high unemployment among young people and where those programs were needed. We agree that the program needs to be directed towards communities where there is high unemployment among young people.

We do not disagree that when Metropolitan Toronto has a youth unemployment rate of 17.1%, that is completely unacceptable, that constitutes a crisis, and that Metro Toronto does need employment programs for its young people. But I remind the minister of the statistics, and perhaps I should repeat them: for northern Ontario, 28.5% in the east and 25.2% in the west; Niagara region, 22.5%; Peterborough-Belleville, 26.3%.

Your flagship program, your only program to deal with the problems of youth unemployment, has frozen out most of the province. The question is, why are the young people in some communities more deserving of help than in other communities?

Hon Mr Cooke: That is absolutely nonsense and the Leader of the Opposition knows that it's nonsense.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): That's what your program is doing.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Cooke: I would like to answer but it's hard to answer when everybody in the Liberal Party is yelling.

The fact of the matter is, again just so that it might sink in over there, there's \$180 million being spent on job creation for young people. There's \$25 million in the Jobs Ontario Youth program alone. The Leader of the Opposition has for some reason taken the \$14 million out of the Jobs Ontario Youth program and she's forgotten about the other \$11 million. The other \$11 million is being spent across the province. So

everybody in the province shares with the Jobs Ontario Youth program, and there's the balance of the \$180 million plus—I believe about 25% of the jobs—through the Jobs Ontario Training program.

So once again there is more money being spent on job creation for young people in this province than has ever taken place in the history of the province, and instead of criticizing that, perhaps the leader would at least recognize that we're doing more than her government ever tried to do.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Premier. Premier, two months ago, I told you that you needed to make a definitive statement on your government's position. You needed to be firm on three things: the amount you needed to cut, the deadline and, finally, what you needed to do if talks failed.

To be successful, to give the union leaders an opportunity to negotiate and still be, after the next election, union leaders, this is exactly what you had to do. Even though you danced around my question yesterday, you are now obviously admitting that you have to be firm on these three things for negotiations to be successful. That's fine and we agree with you, and I think you have a chance now.

Because of all the dithering and the failure to act last fall for January 1, or January 1 for the fiscal year, for those that started on your government fiscal year, because you're halfway through the year-ends for many, will you now admit that to achieve these targets for 1993 without chaos is impossible for your transfer partners to do, and will you agree today to sit down with all those who are interested in finding savings and find at least some of the \$2 billion in expenditure cuts and your other expenditure areas that you did not find in your budget? Will you agree to let us start to do that?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I've heard the suggestions of the Conservative Party that he's put out with respect to the program. If I recall correctly, it involved abandoning the affordable housing program. I was opening the Ismaili housing development in Richmond Hill, in the Jubilee Gardens project, and I can assure the honourable member that to cancel that program would be greeted with bewilderment in all those communities that are looking for affordable housing, and with derision by a housing industry that sees us as providing some incentive at a time when the market is down. So I would say to the honourable member, we don't agree with that proposal, but if you have a particular proposal to make, again any additional proposals to make, of course.

I want to just say again to him that I don't share the premise, and I don't think a lot of other people do either, that there should be any doubt or uncertainty with respect to what the government has set out in its budget and prior to the budget in initiating the social

contract discussions, and I would take very strong issue with him in terms of saying that what the government is proposing is unreasonable or that our approach is unsound. I think it's very reasonable and I think it's very sound and I think that's a strong majority opinion in the province.

Mr Harris: I think it would have been reasonable and very sound had we been dealing with this before the fiscal year was half over or two thirds over for many of the transfer partners—very sound. If you won't accept the billions and billions and billions of dollars of cuts that we've been prepared to go with you and to help you find—your own employees have given you other billions; we've given you many alternatives—then you're going to start to create chaos and uncertainty in this province that we will pay another price for.

Premier, it's in everyone's interests to ensure that if talks proceed on the talks, the deck is not stacked against them. Another of the reasons I believe your talks failed in the last round is because you did not have enough people at the table who are experienced in the kind of settlement you need to reach.

There are many people out there in management and on the employees' side who have a great deal of experience in downsizing, in doing things more efficiently. I give you the Canadian Auto Workers, for example, both union side and management side experienced in how half the number of workers can produce the same number of cars and better cars than how they've done that over the last 20 years.

Why, Premier, would you not consider bringing into the talks some of those labour leaders and employers who have had experience in downsizing? I give you people like Buzz Hargrove, who I think has great experience in that. I give you people like Cliff Pilkey. Why would you not invite these kinds of people to help you give the expertise you need to reach the kind of settlement you need?

Hon Mr Rae: Anybody who would suggest that the leader of the third party doesn't have a sense of humour, I think that we all realize that. We go from, the other day, his ally Ned Pratt to today his colleague in arms Buzz Hargrove. I congratulate that.

Mr Harris: I'll call Buzz. He'll help you with that.

Hon Mr Rae: I've had lots of advice from Mr Hargrove and from others.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs): Don't do it, Bob.

Hon Mr Rae: I intend to stay the course.

Let me say with a degree of seriousness to the member, since I know he put forward a serious suggestion, that both within the context of the Premier's Council and within the context of the labour-management advisory committee, both of which

involve union and management people coming together, we've had a lot of discussions about the organization of work.

Mr Walter Curlook from Inco and Mr Fred Pomeroy, the vice-president of the new amalgamated union of communications workers and paper workers and energy and chemical workers, have given me lots of good advice about the reorganization of the workplace, and that's the kind of advice that we're trying to apply. So I take the comment seriously, even if I certainly detected a certain degree of tongue-in-cheek in the suggestion.

Mr Harris: No, there was absolutely no tongue-in-cheek, and I appreciate that you take the comment seriously.

I, as a number of others, have been very concerned that when you look on the government management side and the union management side over the last 10 years in this province, all have been very successful at spending more money and hiring more people and upsizing, but there's not a lot of experience there in how to be more efficient, delivering services more effectively and downsizing. I've given you suggestions of people. I think you need more than just advice to you personally. I think they have to be at the negotiating table, because that's where I think the lack of experience is.

Let me give you another suggestion. I believe, for whatever well-intentioned purpose, that Michael Decter now has lost a great deal of credibility as far as the negotiations go, and those you've had there as his team. Would you now consider bringing in professional mediators, a Victor Pathe, if you will, or others who have experience in bringing parties together? Will you take that advice and that suggestion, at least in dealing with your own 90,000 civil servants?

Hon Mr Rae: First of all, I want to say that Mr Decter and his team worked very hard and with a great deal of professionalism to—

Mr Harris: No doubt they just didn't have experience.

Hon Mr Rae: Well, I would only say to the honourable member that obviously the process that's under way will have to draw on the very best people, and that's exactly what we intend to do.

1430

The Speaker: New question.

Mr Harris: My second question is to the Premier as well. Because you were not firm two months ago, you've lost a great deal of time. We'll soon be into the second half of 1993 without any cuts having been made to the wage bill to date. Premier, while your social contract talks continue, I feel very strongly that there are many things you should be doing to help this process along right now.

For example, there is the Job Mart, of which I have

a copy. Here's just one where there are all kinds of jobs advertised outside the existing public sector, for jobs. There are newspapers every day that have it in. This is your own classified paper.

To help us to look at downsizing, would you not agree that the sooner we get this attrition clock ticking, the sooner we will get savings? Will you today announce unequivocally that there is a hiring freeze in the Ontario public sector?

Hon Mr Rae: We've already announced very clearly the government's plans to reduce the number of employees in the public service.

Mr Harris: That's right, but if you brought a hiring freeze in, if you stopped this nonsense, if you stopped your silly Minister of Housing from encouraging 5% hikes, so then they could be rolled back—you've got to state unequivocally that this nonsense has to stop. Why make the problem even tougher? As absurd as it may be, the truth is that not one person in your office, not one person in your cabinet, has given serious thought about a backup plan if the social contract talks fail.

I'm only here trying to help you in this last-minute dash or scramble to salvage something and to get some sense out of this. Last week, and again on Monday, I outlined a plan to permanently downsize government over three years, through attrition and a hiring freeze. You said that won't solve all the problems. I agree it won't solve all the problems. But it will solve 56,000 of the problems, which is more than 5%. In fact, it's 6% or 6.5% of the existing broad public service. It will do it without unnecessary layoffs. It will do it without unnecessary hardship to our public servants. Premier, you dismissed that out of hand.

While talks continue, while you pursue other options, while you work on other fronts, will you take this option and implement it today, so that the attrition clock can begin ticking now, as it should have two years ago, as it should have January 1, as it should have two months ago? Why wait another day?

Hon Mr Rae: I think I've already answered the question.

Mr Harris: You've answered the question, but you've got no action. You don't do anything. The problem's getting worse and worse and worse to solve as we go on. So far, all we've got from you is Monday you're going to do something. We still haven't seen it.

Premier, let me, by way of final supplementary, ask you this: Turnaround management in the private sector has taught us that many of the real ideas on efficiency and on effectiveness have come up from the shop floor. Many of them have come from right there, from the front-line workers. Yet the hardworking men and women who make up the broader public sector of this province have been conspicuously absent from your social contract table.

The dedicated union and non-union people I've talked to in North Bay and around the province, and the ones who have been phoning in daily while this process has been going on, tell me that they're willing to share in the economic sacrifice that's going to be required to get this province on track. I know that's not the position of Sid Ryan and Liz Barkley; they've got other agendas that they have to get elected to. I understand that.

To empower the 940,000 working men and women of the broad public sector, though, will you immediately seek their advice? Will you consult them directly, by way of ballot or referendum or write-in suggestions today that can be brought either to the table or the cabinet table, to the solutions?

Hon Mr Rae: That's exactly what we've been doing.

CORPORATE MINIMUM TAX

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): I have a question for the Minister of Finance. It's a sad commentary that in Bob Rae's Ontario the government members are critical of someone who is trying to promote the export of Canadian technology.

I should say to the Minister of Finance that last week, the Premier referred to your "brilliant" budget speech. I have a less charitable view of that document and I'd like to just talk to you about one of the provisions. I'm interested in your corporate minimum tax and what this new tax means for the competitiveness of some of our companies.

On page 30 of the corporate minimum tax document, Improving Tax Fairness, you say the minimum corporate tax will increase the marginal effective tax rate of large, profitable, non-tax-paying corporations. I'm sure you know that this will effectively raise the cost of doing business for these companies in Ontario.

On page 31 you go on to say—and I think this is where there is a decided lack of brilliance—"The corporate minimum tax will help to establish a tax environment that will lead to investment decisions based more on economic considerations and less on tax considerations."

This, surely, is a contradiction. The minister will acknowledge that tax considerations are one of the most integral components of economic considerations. My question to the minister is this: Do you not agree that tax considerations and economic considerations are inseparable and have an influence on investment decisions?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I think the member from Wilson Heights is stretching the cloth a bit thin. The fact is that without a corporate minimum tax, in my view there was an opportunity for some companies, completely and absolutely within the law, of course, to take advantage of what are known as tax expenditures to reduce what would otherwise be a

profitable year down to one in which they paid absolutely no taxes whatsoever.

What we're trying to do is establish a fairness in the corporate tax system so that one company with very similar profits without this tax pays tax and another one does not. I would think this makes it a more level playing field than would otherwise be the case.

Mr Kwinter: The minister understands, I'm sure, the economic principle underlying my question about the fact that taxes cannot be separated out as an economic consideration for an investment decision.

A company has a number of projects that will make money, given the prevailing tax regime. When you raise the tax rate the firm faces, some of these projects become uneconomic. In other words, the company will not go ahead with certain investments because of the higher taxes.

Mr Minister, I'm sure you saw the article that appeared in the Toronto Star today in which the University of Toronto Institute for Policy Analysis talked about the influence of increased taxes. They say: "Without the tax increases"—and I admit they're talking about the GST, but they're talking about the concept of tax increases. They're saying that without that "the economy would be nearly 5% larger, an additional 303,000 Canadians would be working and inflation would be virtually non-existent."

When we are in a position where every new job is needed in this province, why did you introduce this new corporate minimum tax, which will surely stop some new investment in its tracks?

Hon Mr Laughren: First of all, the corporate minimum tax that's going to commence on January 1, 1994, is hardly a punitive or onerous tax. The United States has had a corporate minimum tax for some time now. It's very difficult to compare the two tax rates, given the different tax regimes. But I can tell the member opposite—and I would not want to be partisan on an issue such as this—that since I took this position, I have received a lot more complaints about the employer's health tax introduced by his government, about the commercial concentration tax introduced by his government and about the tire tax introduced by his government than I have on the corporate minimum tax introduced in this budget.

1440

BRIDGE ACCIDENT

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): My question is to the Minister of Labour. I am extremely disappointed that no statement has been made concerning the tragic death of the four workers in St Catharines yesterday. Minister, it is your responsibility to give assurance to the families, to the members of this House and to workers in this province that this tragedy will not occur again in another community.

What action have you personally taken to give that type of guarantee to people in this province, to those families and to workers that a similar tragedy will not happen elsewhere in this province in the future?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): This is indeed a tragic accident, and I want to express my condolences to the families of the four men who died.

The Ministry of Labour is currently conducting an investigation at the scene. We have a full team of people down there, along with the Niagara Regional Police and the coroner's office, and when we have the results, we'll report back to the House on that investigation.

Mrs Witmer: I would have appreciated an answer which was more specific. I would specifically like to ask you the following questions: Why is the investigation going to take several weeks? Will you call an inquest? Why were some workers on the job, while others were home because of the rain?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I understand that there will be an inquest; that has been decided. I can also tell you that I don't think the investigation is going to take several weeks. This is a tragic situation that we have been very concerned with, and as soon as we have the information—

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): How can you give us assurance that this isn't going to happen in Thunder Bay on that bridge? Where have you been? And no statement in the House is a disgrace.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the leader of the third party.

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I'm not going to speculate on what happened until we have the answers, to the member across the way.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIAGARA FALLS

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. About a week ago, I attended the Niagara region—

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Self-serving sensitivity.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Oakville South.

Ms Harrington: About a week I attended the Niagara region's economic development summit at Brock University. Mr George Schrivver, a leading consultant on manufacturing competitiveness, presented some very interesting findings from a survey of 100 of Niagara's industries.

He found, while multinational companies' hiring projections are in fact down, Canadian companies' projections—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Oakville

South, come to order. Will the member take her seat.

Mr Carr: You've got no backbone.

The Speaker: I again ask the member for Oakville South to please come to order.

Mr Carr: Sorry, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Well, it would be very helpful if all members could just resist the temptation for interjections and allow the honourable member for Niagara Falls to place her question.

Ms Harrington: He found that while multinational companies' hiring projections are in fact down for the future, Canadian companies' projections are up.

You will want to know, Madam Minister, that this reflects a decline in the labour- and hydro-intensive, non-specialized industries and an increase in more specialized high-tech industries.

He concluded that product value, not cost, is important, that training is most important now, and indeed smaller Canadian companies have the advantage of being fast, flexible and responsive to the marketplace. His most important message: He urged all the region to have the courage to put our self-interests aside and work together on behalf of the community of Niagara as a whole.

I will send this report over to you, Madam Minister.

The regional chair is now setting up a committee for immediate action within the next 60 days. We do need your help. What can you do to help this initiative right now?

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): Despite the comments from the member opposite, I think we can be more constructive than that. I'd say to the member who asked the question that in fact the economic summit that was held I think was a very, very good step forward in that it brought together representatives of all facets of the community, and I appreciate her sending me a copy of that.

The summit and the involvement of all aspects of the community in the task force that's been set up and the work that's going to be done is the number one important thing for us to support and continue.

I think the ministry and government have to be able to respond in a timely fashion. I will coordinate, through an interministerial process, bringing together all the players that need to be able to be at the table to respond to your community's action plan so that you don't have to spend time running around from ministry to ministry and the various programs. I think we can facilitate that.

As you know, our ministry was responsible for assisting with the funding of the study in the first place. I think the results, some of the new programs we've put in place, the sector partnership fund and others which

really look to supporting training, culture, innovation and those sorts of things, clearly reflect what was found in your region, and I think we're well positioned to be of assistance.

Ms Harrington: A week ago Saturday, I met with the Working Futures Coalition, which is the purple ribbon campaign in Niagara. Madam Minister, they very much want you to come to Niagara to meet with all those who are involved and help them in this working together process. I am asking if you will be able to come.

Hon Ms Lankin: Nothing like putting me on the spot in the House. I appreciate the question from the member. I assure the member that I look forward to meeting people in Niagara. I don't have a date on my calendar right now. I know there's a request in, and I'll try to get her an answer to that question as soon as possible.

But may I say that I really do want to thank the effort of the chair and others, who recognized the need to make the summit and the task force all-inclusive. I think this is really becoming a community-driven process, and that will lead to its success in the end.

BUILDING CODE

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): My question is to the Minister of Housing. You've received some correspondence from the Ontario Home Builders' Association, and the Premier has received similar correspondence, relating to the implementation of the rule changes to the Ontario Building Code that will go into effect very shortly. The specific rule change that I refer to is the requirement that new home builders, under these new regulations, will be required to insulate all basements from floor to ceiling. I'm sure you're familiar with those.

The building community and the real estate community are quite concerned about the impact of these regulations. They support the principle and they work with your ministry in trying to come up with amendments to the Ontario Building Code, but they've said to you and the Premier and others, and they want me to ask you, will you look at delaying the implementation of these regulations? Because the direct impact, Minister, is between \$3,000 and \$5,000 in additional costs on each new home, depending on the size of the home.

This is clearly an opportunity for you to send an economic signal to the housing industry and the real estate industry that you're going to do something to not increase the price of housing at a time when new home starts in the city of Toronto area alone, June over June of last year, have dropped some 32%. The industry is in terrible recession. They are very frightened. Sales have fallen off the table. Minister, they're looking to you for help. Will you delay the implementation of this regulation?

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): The member is asking a question with lots of information in it, most of which is correct, as he recognizes the Ministry of Housing did work very closely with members of the home builders' association and the insulators' representatives and with energy consultants to work out the most effective way of providing that new housing would have full-height basement insulation.

The cost of that has been estimated, for the average new home, at a very low amount on a mortgage, that looks like a reasonable mortgage over the next few years. I'd be glad to provide the member with that information. We're talking under \$10 a month to have full-height basement insulation added to the mortgage cost, and I think most investors in a new home would want to have that kind of guarantee against rising energy prices in the future.

1450

Mr Mahoney: I've never heard such nonsense in my life. I don't need you to provide me with the cost, Minister. Maybe I should be providing you with the cost. Let me give you the cost right here in black and white: framing, \$110; wiring, \$225; insulation, \$280; air vapour and moisture barriers, \$105; drywall, \$470; paint, \$110; drainage barrier, \$1,000; rigid glass fibre, \$1,500; air gap membrane, \$2,200. That's \$3,100. You're saying it's \$10 a month on a mortgage. It's the same mentality you have with financing all your non-profit schemes over 35 years. You're not the Minister of Housing; you're the minister of non-profit housing.

Here's a private sector group that is showing you how you can save consumers between \$3,000 and \$5,000 on the price of a house. It will create jobs. It will create development. It will allow people to buy new homes. They will buy appliances. They will buy furniture—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Will the member place a question, please.

Mr Mahoney: You can get off your duff and do something for this economy. It's a very reasonable request. Simply delay the implementation of this regulation to allow the housing industry to survive the ravages of this recession. Will you do that?

Hon Ms Gigantes: I think the member is making light of a very serious matter. He doesn't have to make references to my anatomy to try to make his point. I would suggest that it is well worth his while to take a look at the costs that are spread out on a mortgage, which is how most people buy their homes, and to say to himself and to agree with others who have looked at this matter in depth that it is a protection in the future for home owners to have a well-insulated basement.

Mr Mahoney: You're a disgrace. You're a socialist disgrace.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Mississauga West.

Hon Ms Gigantes: In the future, we don't want the same kind of energy mistakes being made that are costly to people that people in both those parties made with Ontario Hydro over the years.

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member for Etobicoke West is out of order.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Minister, you are probably aware that earlier this week a federal Employment and Immigration spokesman reported that there are 11,000 warrants that have been issued for refugees and other immigrants who have gone into hiding in the greater Toronto area and are continuing to collect welfare and other benefits paid by your government. Most all of these individuals have been here for over four years.

These warrants have been put on the computers within your own government, in the police stations in the greater Toronto area and the immigration computers federally, but not on your own ministry computers from which you distribute your social assistance funds. The federal refugee backlog program has been in effect the entire term of your government, yet you have not expressed any interest in cooperating with the police or the federal government.

The Provincial Auditor has indicated that welfare fraud and social assistance fraud in this province could be as high as \$600 million. That should be a compelling reason. That's why I ask the minister why he is not cooperating with these other two levels of public administration to ensure the taxpayers have a system of social assistance which is fair to taxpayers and recipients. How can you stand in the House and not cooperate—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Will the member complete his question, please.

Mr Jackson: —with these levels of government in order to effect these savings for taxpayers?

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I don't know where the member gets the information that we would not be cooperating with either the police or the federal authorities to get at any issue that might be dealing with potential fraud in the system. I'd be happy to look into the particular situation and, if need be, come back to the House with a more specific answer. But I would say to him that certainly everything we are doing in the ministry around the question of potential fraud in the system has been to take that issue very seriously.

In fact, there are a number of initiatives that are under way, that have been under way for some time and

to which we've added in the last expenditure control plan, to do a case review of files where we believe there may be some further saving. We certainly would intend to continue cooperating. If the member has any particular information he wants to share with me, I'd be happy to receive it.

Mr Jackson: I don't know where this minister's been. The Progressive Conservative caucus has been presenting for two years means by which we can save taxpayers half a billion dollars in unnecessary, inappropriate or defrauded payments to recipients in this province. This program I'm bringing to your attention is almost five years old, and you're now saying that you would like more information on it.

Minister, the fact is that this level of cooperation has been occurring in the province of Quebec for several years. I will send over to you a copy of the Quebec legislation which was implemented 19 months ago. A copy of this was given to your predecessor, and nothing's been said or done about it. It is called *Gens des services des réseaux: Guide de direction et de vérification*. This is the legislation in specific and regulations in the province of Quebec. I'd ask the minister to read them.

In your social contract talks that have broken down, one of the first items put on the table by the civil service in this province was that they believe, the people who handle the payments, that you can save half a billion dollars in your welfare system.

The Speaker: Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Jackson: That's why they've asked for whistle-blowing legislation to protect them and why they're asking, Minister, that you and your government listen to them.

Please, Minister, will you look at this report, because taxpayers expect that we have a welfare system—

The Speaker: Will the member complete his question, please.

Mr Jackson: —that is sensitive to recipients and fair to taxpayers who are footing the bill. I would like you to look into this issue of the 11,000 illegal immigrants in this province collecting welfare and report back—

The Speaker: The question's been asked.

Hon Mr Silipo: Again I would say to the member that we continue to take the issue of fraud in the system quite seriously. He will know that one of the things we have done through the expenditure reductions beyond the issue that I mentioned in my earlier answer is to look at how we could align our regulations to be more in keeping with the changes specifically around the question of the refugee claimant process. I will be happy to take a look at the proposals he's given me.

I will say to him, as he's mentioned the province of Quebec, that we are involved in some activities directly

with that province around the question of fraud as they relate to people on both sides of the border, and I certainly intend for us to continue our efforts to deal with questions of fraud in the system in order that we can ensure that the services and the benefits are there for the people who need them.

WASTE REDUCTION

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): My question is for the Minister of Environment and Energy. The people of Ontario have made tremendous strides in their efforts to reduce waste by practising the 3Rs, reducing, reusing and recycling, and have met the goal of 25% diversion from landfill in 1992.

As you know, it is our intent to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by at least 50% by the year 2000. Your ministry is making law the new 3Rs regulations which will require municipalities and other sectors, if they have not already done so, to develop reduction, reuse and recycling activities to meet that goal.

As you know, we are living in difficult times of fiscal restraint, cost cutting and funding reductions. In my constituency of Kingston and The Islands, there is great concern about the provincial waste management master plan program. On behalf of the city of Kingston, I ask you why the responsibility of waste management planning and the associated costs remain in the hands of the city and the township of Kingston instead of with the province.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The reason that waste management planning is the responsibility of the municipality is so the municipality will be able to design plans which best meet the needs and concerns of the local people in the community. The province offers waste management master planning assistance to the municipalities.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Mississauga West.

Hon Mr Wildman: In the case of Kingston, the ministry is committed to providing \$680,000 in funding for that city's waste management master plan.

Mr Gary Wilson: The waste management master plan program has provided support to the Kingston plan, but there are problems with it, particularly in terms of 3Rs acceleration, planning guidance and customer service from the ministries. What is the Minister of Environment and Energy doing to improve this program?

1500

Hon Mr Wildman: The ministry has published Initiatives Paper No 2, Waste Management Planning in Ontario, which recommended a number of reforms to the master planning process. As a result of the comments that we've received across the province on that paper, the program is undergoing extensive review and

restructuring. For one, no longer will the 3Rs planning be held up as part of a more complex landfill-siting process; they will be separate. We are providing new guidance documents for planning and policy and, as an example of trying to expedite the process, the Ministry of Environment and Energy will appoint advisers as primary contacts for municipalities, to provide clear and consistent and timely advice in the waste management planning studies that are carried on by the city, and the city and the township of Kingston will be able to benefit from that.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mr Charles Beer (York North): My question is to the Minister of Education and Training. It concerns Bill 4 and the issue of what are termed "hard-to-serve children." As you know, there is currently in the Education Act a section that deals with those youngsters who have severe and often multiple disabilities. The act sets out a process through which parents can have their son or daughter designated as hard to serve and thereby receive special funding so their child can receive appropriate educational instruction. Bill 4 would remove this right and this process.

Yesterday the standing committee on social development heard a disturbing story from two witnesses that your ministry is telling parents of hard-to-serve children that upon passage of Bill 4 you will be seeking retroactively to claw back funds which your ministry has already provided these families. These parents and those children have been through enough.

My question is simply this: Minister, will you make a commitment to them today that they will not have to repay any funds that were provided to them by your ministry in a legal and in an appropriate way? Will you make that commitment?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): A similar-type question was asked yesterday by the critic for the third party. I indicated to her that the dates within the legislation are not particularly new, that other pieces of legislation that were in the House that have now been brought together as an omnibus bill reflect the previous legislation.

But I certainly have also heard the concerns, and they've been expressed by yourself as well as the critic for the third party, and I will take a look at the specific concerns that parents are having. I understand that the numbers of students affected are very small and I certainly give the commitment that I'll take a look at the issue and respond quickly.

Mr Beer: I appreciate that the minister will do that. But regardless of whether it is 1 or 6 or 100, the need is real and is immediate. I would draw your attention, when looking into this matter, to the presentation made by the parents of hard-to-serve children, and I quote: "The ministry has gone so far as to inform parents of this group that the ministry is going to want its money

back. That is terribly threatening, particularly when a disabled child has legally and properly received the benefit under Ontario law."

Secondly, you might be interested in looking at a letter from a member of the ministry staff, dated November 6, 1992, with respect to Terry Mogford. Mrs Mogford was before the committee yesterday. Minister, the question again is very simple, and quite frankly I don't think it will take a great deal of time to look into and I would urge you to make the decision before the committee rises.

Again that question is, will you make sure that those individuals do not have to repay any moneys which they legally and appropriately had received? That is the commitment that is being asked from you.

Hon Mr Cooke: Maybe I misunderstood part of the thrust of the question. I can assure the member that the Ministry of Education is not going to be going back and asking people to repay money. In fact, it is my understanding that the commitment is that when the legislation is passed, the ministry will continue to fund students until the end of the school year. So there's not going to be any retroactive collection of payments that the ministry has made back to June 2, 1990, the date that's in the legislation. So I can assure the member that that's not the case, not the intention, not the plan, nor will it happen.

LANDFILL

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): This question is for the Minister of Environment and Energy. The dump saga continues in York region, and now we are reaching the most horrific part. The Interim Waste Authority has released data on the final sites in the selection process, and all the sites have failed the hydrological tests. All the sites have sand and gravel deposits under them, the sites have sand and salt under them, and a number of the sites have large aquifers underneath them.

As a result, when the Interim Waste Authority goes to the next stage and should any of these sites be selected, all of the sites in York region will require at least two clay liners and two of the sites in Vaughan would require three—that's three—clay liners. The Interim Waste Authority has not identified the cost of the clay, which could cost well over \$100 million for this project. So I ask you, are you prepared to release more information on the cost of this sham and will you stop the interim waste process from selecting any one of these sites and will you review other alternatives?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The member knows full well that the government will not intervene in the Interim Waste Authority's work. It is their responsibility to identify sites and to determine which sites they believe to be the most appropriate that would meet the environmental requirements and that would then be subject to an environ-

mental assessment. It would be most inappropriate for the government to intervene and to in any way prejudice an environmental assessment of any of the sites that might be proposed.

Mr Cousens: The honourable member from Etobicoke reminds me how this government has changed its mind on its list when the Premier made a promise, but the fact now is that the Interim Waste Authority is out of control. It's totally out of control, and for you to stand back there and not get involved and not understand how serious this is to the people of York region is to make the matters even worse.

York region has now found that none of the sites are suitable and they're all going to be ineffective as far as protecting the lands and surfaces around them. It's all going to be done at great cost to the taxpayer. You spent \$30 million already; now it could be up to \$120 million for the extra clay liners. We're talking costs that are just out of control. You refuse to consider alternatives, but your head puppet, Mr Pitman, is making deals for the expansion of Keele Valley as we talk and yet you're also changing the rules of the process.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Cousens: The original rules were that the height of these would not exceed 40 to 45 feet. Now, in fact, because of the hydrological conditions, the height of these sites in York region—

The Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Mr Cousens: —and the one in Markham could be over 200 feet. York region will have a wonder of the world: the great pyramids of garbage.

I say, when will you halt the process and consider other alternatives to making a wreck and ruin of our communities in York region?

Hon Mr Wildman: I understand the emotion with which the member and many of his constituents view this difficult issue. However, I don't think it's appropriate for terms such as "puppet" to be used in relation—

Mr Cousens: He is a puppet.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Markham.

Hon Mr Wildman: —to a distinguished former member of this Legislature—

Mr Cousens: A former NDP socialist appointed by you to interface between the community. He is a puppet.

The Speaker: Would the member for Markham please come to order.

Hon Mr Wildman: —who has served with distinction both in this Legislature and in the province. It is most inappropriate for that member to have the gall to use those kinds of terms in relation to a distinguished member of society in this province.

Mr Cousens: He is a puppet. What are you? You

are a puppet of someone else in the dump legislation.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Wildman: The member also suggests that I should in some way halt a process which is an independent one. He also suggests that this government is unprepared to look at alternatives when he knows full well that I have said on a number of occasions that if a proponent wishes to put forward an EA on alternatives, they are welcome to do so.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Mr Cousens: Mr Speaker, why doesn't he understand?

The Speaker: What I understand is that the member is out of order right now.

1510

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas the provincial government in its expenditure control plan, without consultation, has proposed to reduce the ability of new family practitioners, paediatricians and psychiatrists to receive full payment from the Ontario Health Insurance Plan for services provided;

"Whereas the reduction of payments to these physicians will result in the lack of their ability to practise medicine;

"Whereas these same reductions in payments will limit the choice the citizens of Ontario will have in selecting a physician of their choice,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must reconsider this arbitrary and restrictive decision and look at alternatives in consultation with the Ontario Medical Association and the Professional Association of Interns and Residents of Ontario."

I concur heartily with this petition. I've affixed my name to it, and urge the government to make the announcement of the policy and to bring that forward immediately, because these students are graduating now and must know what the government intends to do.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have many petitions here from churches in my area, many individuals, almost over 3,000 signatures. It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Toronto Board of Education is already endangering the health of children, discriminating against heterosexuals by distributing the dangerous and heterophobic sexual orientation guide as well as the so-called AIDS education flyers which condone and

recommend buggery, anal intercourse and teaching that anal sex with a condom is safe; and

"Whereas the Education Act guarantees the right to withdraw from instruction that is in conflict with the religious belief held by a student, guardian or parent,

"We demand that the Ministry of Education immediately prohibit any instruction in the school system that offends against the Criminal Code or conflicts with the personal values and beliefs of most people, including the teaching of homosexuality and homosexual consulting and any homosexual hotline service in the schools or promoted by the schools and the distribution by any person of so-called AIDS education flyers which promote buggery or oral sex."

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): I have a petition signed by 226 students of Northern Collegiate. It reads as follows:

"We, the graduating students of the Sarnia riding, believe that accessible education is and should be a priority. We believe that large increases in university/college tuition without changes to the Ontario student assistance program creates an elitist education system that only the wealthy can afford.

"Therefore, we demand fiscal responsibility and monetary restraint by the New Democratic Party of Ontario in the development and funding of new and existing programs. We also demand that a universal loan program be initiated to offset the increases in tuition.

"We believe that this will create an egalitarian education system that will benefit this province in all areas of the global market of the future."

GAMBLING

Mr Jean Poirier (Prescott and Russell): I have petitions from 39 members of the Russell United Church and Kenmore United Church petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, petition that the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos in Ontario."

I've assigned my signature and my support to these petitions.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition and it reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated

with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos to that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I support this petition and I have affixed my signature to it.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): I have a petition signed by a number of people that Bill 164 be withdrawn. I do not support this petition.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Mr Speaker, as you know, I've been presenting instalments of a petition which attracted well over 15,000 signatures in support of Bruce A, and I will read it as follows:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

This is supported in addition by chambers of commerce, business associations, labour groups, riding associations, school boards and other groups of people. I affix my signature.

GAMBLING

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): I have a petition which is signed by members of the Central United Church in Unionville.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of

addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, *Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome*, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling on individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

It is signed by David Reeve, the minister, and a large number of the community. I am pleased to affix my signature as well.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have two petitions opposing casino gambling. One with four names on it is from St David's United Church in Woodstock. The other one has 18 names from people in the Embro area, Lakeside area, Harrington and St Marys. I submit them.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Charles Beer (York North): I have a petition to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the following undersigned citizens of the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Correctional Services, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I have affixed my signature to that petition.

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and Grenville, members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 441, employed at Leeds-Grenville Phased Housing Programs Inc in Brockville, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I have affixed my signature in support of this petition.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mrs Ellen MacKinnon (Lambton): I have a petition.

"Whereas we feel the Canada-US trade deal has done immeasurable damage to the economy of the province of Ontario, causing a loss of more than 45,000 jobs in Ontario alone; and

"Whereas we feel the proposed North American free trade agreement will have an even more devastating effect on Ontario, resulting in the loss of not only more jobs but also a reduction in our environmental standards, our labour standards, our workers' rights and our overall quality of life;

"We petition the Legislature of Ontario to fight this free trade deal with whatever means possible and we petition the House of Commons in Ottawa to stop this deal now. We ask that this petition be presented before the Ontario Legislature and forwarded at our behalf for presentation in Ottawa."

This is signed by members of the Lambton county agricultural community.

1520

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): As you know, there are some more than 15,000 people who have signed a petition in support of Bruce A, and this is another instalment in this petition. Basically, the reasons that they are supporting it read as follows:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

The signatures to this petition's instalment are from Kincardine, Port Elgin, Sauble Beach and Hamilton. I have affixed my signature in support.

SENIORS' HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly:

"We, the members of the Merry Kin Seniors' Club and the United Senior Citizens of Ontario, are opposed to changes in our health plan that would introduce user fees for seniors' drug needs."

LANDFILL

Mr Charles Beer (York North): I have several petitions from a number of people involved in real estate who have written and asked that I present the following petition to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the government eliminate landfill sites in York region and redirect tax dollars into research for waste management alternatives that will not turn land into garbage."

This is signed by several hundred realtors in York region.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and Grenville, members of Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 441, employed with the Brockville and Area Community Living Association in Brockville, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it, and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I have affixed my signature in support.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Again I rise to present an instalment of the petition in favour of the maintenance of the functioning of Bruce A units:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons," and then it goes on to enunciate that they are economically viable, that they'll save \$2 billion, that there is an environmental safety attached to them and that a partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the province and the community surrounding.

The signatures are from the Port Elgin area, Southampton, and I have attached my signature in support.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): Again I have a petition addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and Grenville, members of Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 440, employed with the Ministry of Finance assessment office in Brockville, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it, and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector, and the strengthening of public services."

Again I sign my name in support.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Over 15,000 people have signed a petition with respect to the future viability of Bruce A. This is another instalment in that petition and it is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province.

"In addition to the undersigned, this petition is further endorsed by the following municipal, business and labour groups:

"Councils: Bruce township, Huron township, Kincardine, Kincardine township, Owen Sound city, Port Elgin, Ripley, Saugeen, Tiverton;

"Chambers of commerce: Kincardine, Port Elgin and Southampton;

"Business associations: Kincardine BIA, Port Elgin downtown BIA, Bruce County Realtors Association;

"Labour groups"—labour groups support this—"CUPE 1000, the Society; Grey/Bruce District Labour Council; Ontario Nurses' Association, Kincardine and Southampton; Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Association, District 44; Service Employees'

International Union, Kincardine and Southampton; Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 527; Electricians Local 1788; Sheet Metal Workers Local 473; Ironworkers Local 736; Machinists and Aerospace Workers Local 1120"—

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Order, please. Would the member for Bruce complete his petition. I appreciate that it's always interesting to know who has signed a petition. However, this is not necessary at the presentation of petitions.

Mr Elston: It isn't necessary, except to explain, Mr Speaker, to the province of Ontario that not only are the 15,000 people who have attached their signatures to this petition in support, but these following groups. A large number of labour organizations in the province of Ontario are endorsing and in fact encouraging people to sign the petition. That is here stated. I am at liberty to read that, and I will just conclude very quickly, if I'm not interrupted too much more.

"Hotel and Restaurant Workers Local 75; Bricklayers Local 12; Allied Trades Council, representing Carpenters Local 2222; Cement Masons Local 598; Labourers Local 1059; Insulators Local 95; Millwrights Local 1592; Operating Engineers Local 793; Painters Local 1590; Teamsters Local 230;

"Riding associations of the NDP in Bruce, the Liberal association, the Progressive Conservative association."

I have affixed my name in support of this petition, along with the signatories who hail from Tiverton, Port Elgin, Mildmay, Walkerton and Ripley.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Mrs Marland from the standing committee on government agencies presented the committee's fourth report.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the member wish to make a statement on the report she has just presented to the House?

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): No, Mr Speaker. Thank you. I have no comment on that report.

The Acting Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 106(g)(11), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mrs MacKinnon from the standing committee on regulations and private bills presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bills with amendments:

Bill Pr69, An Act respecting the City of Ottawa

Bill Pr77, An Act respecting the Town of Richmond Hill

Bill Pr87, An Act respecting the Township of Aldborough and the Village of Rodney.

Your committee recommends that Bill Pr81, An Act respecting the Sisters of Charity at Ottawa, be not reported.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PROVINCIAL OFFENCES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993 LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES INFRACTIONS PROVINCIALES

On motion by Mr Pouliot, the following bill was introduced for first reading:

Bill 47, An Act to amend certain Acts in respect of the Administration of Justice / Loi modifiant certaines lois en ce qui concerne l'administration de la justice.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Interjections: No.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1531 to 1536.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Could I ask all members to please take their seats.

We will now proceed with the vote on Mr Pouliot's motion. All those in favour of Mr Pouliot's motion will rise one at a time and be identified by the Clerk. All those in favour?

Ayes

Abel, Akande, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Carter, Charlton, Christopherson, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Coppen, Dadamo, Duignan, Farnan, Ferguson, Fletcher, Gigantes, Grier, Hansen, Harrington, Haslam, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Laughren, MacKinnon, Mamoliti, Marchese, Mathysen, Mills, Morrow, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Rizzo, Silipo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Ward, Waters, Wessenger, White, Wildman, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Winninger, Wiseman, Wood, Ziemba.

The Acting Speaker: I would like to remind all members that it's very difficult for the clerks at the table to hear what's going on with such a high level of noise.

All those opposed, please rise and be identified by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnott, Beer, Brown, Caplan, Carr, Cordiano, Cousens, Cunningham, Eddy, Eves, Grandmaître, Henderson, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Mahoney, Marland, Miclash, Morin, Murdoch (Grey), Murphy, O'Neil (Quinte), Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Poirier, Poole, Runciman, Ruprecht, Soja, Stockwell, Sullivan, Tilson, Turnbull, Wilson (Simcoe West), Witmer.

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 57; the nays, 33.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes are 57; the nays are 33. I declare the motion carried. Does the Minister of Transportation have some opening remarks?

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): Thank you, Mr Speaker—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member for Mississauga West on a point of order.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Mr Speaker, on a point of order in reference to section 38: I'd like to read under 38(a) where it states:

"Every bill shall be introduced upon a motion for leave for introduction and first reading, specifying the title of the bill, no notice being required.

"(b) The motion for introduction and first reading shall be decided without amendment or debate, but in the case of a public bill, the mover may make a brief explanation of its purposes."

And my point of order:

"(c) On the introduction of a government bill, a compendium of background information shall be delivered to the opposition critics."

My critic has not received anything from the government. This clearly is a government bill. The rules state, 38(c), that "a compendium of background information shall be delivered to the opposition critics." My critic knows nothing of the details of this bill. After the vote has taken place, the minister responsible is going to stand up and give us an explanation, after we've already voted on it?

My Speaker, I would ask you to rule that the vote is out of order and that the introduction of the bill is out of order.

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): On the same point of order, Mr Speaker: It would appear to be quite clear that this bill is out of order and the whole vote's out of order.

The Acting Speaker: I believe the honourable minister has, at this point in time, some information for the critics and an explanation. Will we now proceed with the explanation?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Just before we proceed any further, I should

inform the House and you, Mr Speaker, in respect to the questions that have been raised, that the information they're requiring had been delivered to the staff of both caucuses before the minister got to his feet. That material is available to the critics in question.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. We're wasting valuable time. On the same point of order, the member for Mississauga West.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, it's your very difficult job, from time to time, to make rulings based on the words that are in this book, but also based on certain commonsense traditions that have taken place.

It would seem to me that if the rulings call for a compendium of information to be presented to the critics, then it means just that. It did not say "to their staff somewhere around in the back." How would they even know who their staff was, for goodness' sake? It says "to their critics." On top of that, by implication, under section 38(a), it says, "Every bill," which I presume would mean public or government bill, "shall be introduced upon a motion for leave for introduction and first reading, specifying the title of the bill, no notice being required."

Now, they introduce the bill. The motion is called for first reading. The voice vote took place. We called for a division. A vote takes place. Now the minister is saying he's prepared to deliver a compendium of information to the staff of the critics or that it's already been delivered.

This is totally out of order. It is a breach of our privilege as opposition members. It forced us to vote on a bill without the data being available to our critic. The vote is out of order, the introduction of the bill is out of order and this minister is out of order.

The Acting Speaker: The member for London North, on the same point?

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): Mr Speaker, we had a five-minute bell before the vote was called. We did not receive the information during the bell or before the bell. We did not know what we were voting for. We asked the Clerk for the information. We were not given the information by the Clerk. The reason we have this rule is so that we can get the information. The orders of this House do not allow the Clerk to tell me what was in the bill, Mr Speaker. I think this is out of order and you should be ruling it as such.

The Acting Speaker: It's the Chair's understanding that the bill as presented meets the requirements, and if indeed members within the Legislature want this to be changed, we'll have to address it in the standing orders. We now proceed—

Mr Mahoney: On a point of order.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Mississauga West, same point of order?

Mr Mahoney: The same point of order, Mr Speaker. I understand what you've just said. In essence, I think you've said that our point of order is not a point of order. That's what I hear you saying. Now, maybe you can help me, sir. Did you—

The Acting Speaker: I have mentioned that you have a valid point of order, which has been addressed, and the bill is in order.

Mr Mahoney: Well, Mr Speaker, my question to you, sir—perhaps you'll have to seek some guidance on this from the staff within the Speaker's office, but the word "shall" is not very confusing to me. The word "shall" simply says that on the introduction of a government bill—when you called for introduction of bills, the minister stood up and introduced a bill. The standing order says, "On the introduction of a government bill." I would presume that would be at the time the minister introduces the bill. I don't know how else you determine the words "On the introduction of a government bill" to mean anything other than that. Then it goes on to say "a compendium of background information shall be delivered." Not should be, not might be, not maybe it will be: "shall be delivered."

So I don't understand, Mr Speaker, how you can rule that this process is in order, when the minister stood up to introduce the bill, no compendium of information was delivered, when the standing orders—you say we have to address it through the standing orders. With due respect, sir, it is addressed in the standing orders. It clearly says that on the introduction of the bill, a compendium "shall be delivered." I don't understand, Mr Speaker, how you can possibly rule that the introduction of this bill is in order or that the vote was in order. Would you please help me?

The Acting Speaker: On the same point of order, the member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Mr Speaker, let me be very clear on my point of order. This is a very practical situation that just took place.

When you asked for bills to be introduced in the House, the minister stood up. He stood up to introduce the bill that he had in his hand. We did not have the compendium notes on this side of the House; the Liberal Party did not have the compendium notes.

I refer back to the standing orders. They've been completely and clearly enunciated by the member from Mississauga West.

From a practical point of view, I asked the minister very clearly, as did a number of people on this side of the House: What is this bill regarding? What is the content of this bill? What does this bill in fact say?

Now, Mr Speaker, I want your attention, sir.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. I will not listen much longer to this point of order. We have addressed

it and we must proceed.

Mr Stockwell: No, Mr Speaker, from a practical point of view, very practical, the question was put to the minister: What is this bill regarding? The minister refused to answer. I asked other members on the other side of the House and the other members refused to answer. From a practical point, I appeal to you in the chair. We did not have compendium notes on this side of the House. The minister wouldn't tell us what the bill was regarding. How then can you expect us on this side of the House to make a responsible vote when no one tells us what is entailed in the legislation the minister is speaking about? It's not fair nor reasonable.

1550

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Natural Resources for, I hope, a very short comment on—

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): Environment and Energy, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Environment and Energy; I stand corrected.

Hon Mr Wildman: Just two points, very quickly. It seems to me that the member from Mississauga West raised a point legitimately that you listened to and you ruled upon. It was also pointed out that the material that is being called for was delivered to the opposition House leaders this morning at 9:30. Now, there are two points. If the members continue to raise points, it seems to me, Mr Speaker—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Wildman: It seems to me that if the members continue to raise points, they have to make clear whether they are indeed attempting to challenge the Chair, which I believe to be out of order.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Parkdale, very short.

Mr Tony Ruprecht (Parkdale): Let me just indicate that the member for Mississauga West obviously has a very important point to make, and that is that we need the compendium to this legislation. There's no doubt about that.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I did not hear you make a ruling to this effect, and I would think that, because this issue is very clear, unless we get some good indication from the Chair, I see you have no other choice but to adjourn the House until we have a ruling from you, Chair.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Mahoney: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker: I've heard just about as much as I can handle.

Mr Mahoney: Are you telling me you won't hear a point of order?

The Acting Speaker: We will hear a point of order.

The amendments also include a number of changes needed to carry out day-to-day administrative operations such as electronic recording and filing of documents.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Introduction of bills.

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 4

Mr Charles Beer (York North): I have a point of order which is not related to the discussion that we just had.

I want to make reference to several passages out of the Hansard of one of the standing committees, but I rise under standing order 107(a), "Standing and select committees shall be severally empowered to examine, inquire into and report from time to time on all such matters as may be referred to them by the House," and 107(b), "Except with the House otherwise orders, each committee shall have power to send for persons, papers and things."

Mr Speaker, I will also want to refer to Erskine May and I will come to that in a moment, but I would refer you to the standing committee on social development on Monday, June 7. This is in the rush Hansard, but it is pages 1710-1, 1710-2, 1710-3 and following.

The reason I rise is that I believe the privileges of the members of the committee and, by extension, the members of this Legislature have been infringed. I want to take you to 1710-2 for an exchange between our colleague the member from London North and our colleague the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education and Training, the member for Sault Ste Marie.

In this exchange on that page, and I would like to quote, Mrs Cunningham, the member from London North, notes that a constituent of the parliamentary assistant had been informed of the committee's hearings and was going to be coming to appear on the Tuesday. I'm now quoting from the record.

"Mrs Cunningham: That's lucky for her. Mine just saw the ad in the paper today. Lucky for her.

"Mr Martin: You knew about this a long time ago, Dianne. You knew about these hearings. You knew that this piece of legislation was coming forward. If you'd been as proactive as I was, you would have had your people here and presenting. You didn't even come up with the—

"Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, can I ask the parliamentary assistant a specific question? Can I therefore, the people I met on Thursday and Friday in my London office, tell them that they can come to these meetings, even though they haven't been scheduled? Is that your direction to me?

"Mr Martin: No, it's not.

"Mrs Cunningham: You said if I had been as proactive as you—

"Mr Martin: Yes. You're too late now.

"Mrs Cunningham: —that I could get my people here.

"Mr Martin: You're too late now.

"Mrs Cunningham: I'm too late. Too late for who? The government or the democratic process?

"Mr Martin: Too late for the process, Dianne. Yes, this process.

"Mrs Cunningham: Too late for the democratic process as this government sees it..."

Now, in Erskine May, Parliamentary Practice, 21st edition, on page 607, "Reporting of bills before consideration has been completed," I quote, "It is the duty of a standing committee, as of all committees, to give the matters referred to it due and sufficient consideration."

The privileges of the member from London North, of the members of the standing committee on social development and of the members of this Legislature have been infringed because, in point of fact, the government moved to block discussion and debate on Bill 4, which was before the committee, by saying there would not be hearings in the summer and by seeking to regulate what was going to transpire in June.

This is a matter, in this bill, of major issues of importance, which we have said need far more discussion. The parliamentary assistant has simply said that the member from London North and anyone else who had people to bring forward to participate in the discussion were too late. In view of the fact that the government will not allow the committee to properly discuss the bill as Erskine May has set out; in view of the fact that the government House leader has refused to allow sufficient time for that bill to be considered in committee, I believe that under the standing orders and under Erskine May, the privileges of the members of the committee have been infringed and I would ask you to so direct so that we can ensure there will be hearings this summer and so that those who wish to come before the committee to discuss the very important special education provisions that are within that bill, the provisions respecting child care, the provisions respecting junior kindergarten and a whole pot-pourri of other proposals which the government wants to cram through in the month of June—I believe, Mr Speaker, that you need to direct that we will return to that bill and have hearings in the summer so all those who wish to come before the committee can do so.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The member brings forth, I believe, an area that must be looked at. The Speaker will take it under advisement. The matter is presently in committee, I gather. Is this right, the member for York North? The Speaker is advised that the committee presently sitting should be dealing with this matter and at that point, if the commit-

tee cannot solve this within its boundaries, then can proceed beyond the committee itself.

1610

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Mr Charlton moved government notice of motion number 6:

That, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House, in relation to Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, the period of time following routine proceedings when Bill 96 is called as the first order of business until 5 pm on that same sessional day, shall be allotted to further consideration of the bill in committee of the whole House. All amendments proposed to be moved to the bill shall be filed with the Clerk of the assembly by 4 pm on the sessional day on which the bill is considered in committee of the whole House. Any divisions required during clause-by-clause consideration of the bill in the committee of the whole House shall be deferred until 5 pm on this sessional day. At 5 pm on this sessional day, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved and the Chair of the committee of the whole House shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto and report the bill to the House. Any divisions required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put, the members called in once and all deferred divisions taken in succession.

That upon receiving the report of the committee of the whole House, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, which question shall be decided without debate or amendment. No deferral of any required division shall be permitted.

That the period following routine proceedings of a further sessional day when Bill 96 is called as the first order of business until 5 pm shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill. At 5 pm on such day, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment. No deferral of any required division shall be permitted.

That in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Are there some opening remarks?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): It's an interesting time to have to move into this debate. I would in fact even suggest to the opposition that we don't require a debate on this motion. They've just very amply conducted that debate for us.

They've just provided this House with a perfect example of why the government has been forced to resort to time allocation of legislation. The opposition members in a very deliberate way, in order to ensure that the night sitting motion for next week could not be dealt with today, used up over half an hour on the clock, so that the order which we had agreed we would proceed with today could not proceed.

Yesterday, in my comments on another motion that we debated here, the House leader for the opposition and the House leader for the third party and some of the members of the third party challenged me to talk about total time on legislation and I'd love to do that here this afternoon.

One of the reasons why this House traditionally has worked well is because the House leaders' process in this House has worked well. The House leaders' process in this House has not worked well for the last two and a half years. It has not worked well because the members of the opposition parties have decided that they are going to filibuster every single piece of government legislation.

I made reference to the time consumed on third reading in my comments yesterday. Today, I'd like to talk for a few minutes about total time consumed on legislation during this Parliament versus the very long established traditions of this House. For many years—we can go back a decade or we can go back two decades—we had a Parliament here that was turning out on average just over 30 bills a session. That record is now down to about 13 on a consistent basis, session after session, ever since the election in September 1990.

If we look at the actual debate that the members opposite were referring to yesterday, the opposition on a consistent basis, both official opposition and third party, has escalated the time consumed on dealing with a bill from beginning to end by 240% in this Parliament. The opposition, from time to time, likes to talk about this government ruining the traditions of this House, but an escalation of 240% is gamesmanship, it's a destruction of long-standing traditions in this House, and this government is not going to put up with it.

When we get pushed into a corner, when an opposition who, when the bill was being reported back to the House, in this case Bill 96, didn't even think it needed committee of the whole House, to be told a few moments later that it needed committee of the whole and to be told a day later they couldn't tell us how many days committee of the whole would take, that's a process that is unacceptable. It doesn't reflect incompetence on the part of the opposition; it reflects outright obstruction by the opposition in this House.

The House leader for the third party can stand up in this House and do his little red-faced rants, but this government is going to proceed with its legislative agenda. We're going to stay here until that legislative

to be held, not the least of which, I might say—and the Minister of Housing is over there having a good little chuckle—is that we want to be here to talk about unemployment.

I mention unemployment because with regard to the bill that is being cut off here, I think most people out in the workplace—the unions, the employee groups, the employers—would say that what is fundamental to our future economic success is our ability to have a skilled, trained workforce. It's absolutely essential, and that's what this bill is all about. But it is flawed, it's fundamentally flawed, and that's why we need to have a significant debate.

The Minister of Housing was having a good laugh about us being here in the summer. We will be here in the summer. We are looking forward to it. We are looking forward, particularly, to debating the unemployment situation. I'm glad that she had a little chuckle over there because it gave me an opportunity to raise something that is very troubling to me. I'm not sure that we've all yet internalized it. I mention these numbers because this bill is theoretically attempting to deal with it.

What has happened with the employment situation in Ontario—and I'm one who's never said this is all Bob Rae's fault. I've never said that. Publicly, I've always said one cannot blame Bob Rae for all of this. It is not credible to think it's all Bob Rae's fault. I do think that the fiscal situation and the way the NDP has run the province have frankly been close to a disaster. I know the government members may not like to hear that, but I see just too few signs of hope and too many signs of despair out there.

When the NDP came in, Ontario had far and away the lowest unemployment rate in the country. Now four provinces have better unemployment rates than Ontario. I remember your first budget. You predicted that by now the unemployment rate would begin to improve dramatically, that the unemployment rate would be below 9%.

Premier Bob Rae is always fond of saying: "It's free trade and it's this and it's that. Don't blame us." Free trade came in years ago. When you prepared your budgets, you knew free trade was there. You surely must have predicted the economic outlook on the basis of what you knew then, and so you predicted. You told the people of Ontario two years ago—remember that?—that you had the solution to the recession. You had a unique solution to the recession. You were going to spend your way out of the recession. Do you remember that?

It has been a dismal failure. I think even—if you could ever say it; I know politically it's difficult to say—many of you, if not all of you, would acknowledge that was a fundamental mistake, a fundamental mistake. Now we're all paying for it, because you let the tap run

when everyone else said, "Listen, we need restraint." The word "restraint" never appeared in your first budget. It was a unique proposal to spend your way out of the recession.

My point is that Bob Rae promised the people of Ontario—he knew there was free trade, he knew the world situation, he knew all of these things, but he promised the people of Ontario that he had the plans that would get unemployment down and employment up, that would work our way out of our economic problems, and it hasn't worked. Last year, again they promised that the unemployment situation now would be improving, and it's not.

The budget, as I've said other times—the most damning page in the budget for me is page 45. What it says on page 45 is this. Here's the key line: "However, renewed employment growth will encourage their return to the labour force. If these discouraged workers were counted as 'unemployed,' Ontario's current unemployment rate would be about 14%." Those are the facts. We have a 14% unemployment rate in the province of Ontario, as the budget points out. "One out of every three unemployed workers in Ontario has been jobless for more than six months. The problem of long-term unemployment is likely to persist over the medium term."

They have a chart here that shows the real unemployment rate, 1993, at 14% and by 1996, it is still at 12%. That is a disgrace, it's unacceptable, it is something we can't live with, yet it's just assumed in the budget that this is the Ontario of today and of tomorrow. I would say to all of us, there is a fundamental change when we go through literally—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: On a point of order, the honourable member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, one, two, three, four, five, six members of the government are here. I don't believe we have a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals (Mr Alex D. McFedries): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Call in the members.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Scarborough-Agincourt may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Phillips: What we were talking about was dealing with the unemployment rate, because trying to get the economy going again, one of the keys—and I am totally supportive of it—is finding better ways of

helping improve the skills in the workplace. OTAB is fundamentally flawed in that respect. One of the members opposite asked me what was the unemployment rate in 1988 or 1989, I think it was.

The reason I raise this point of my concern is that we have never gone through a period of time when the unemployment rate has been so high for so long. What I think all of us have to begin to internalize and think about is that we have a totally different situation. We have literally hundreds of thousands of people, talented, anxious to work, looking for work, who have no hope of finding work.

Interjections.

Mr Phillips: The member opposite asked me what were the unemployment numbers. I'll just go through them for the members here. I'll just run through them, because it demonstrates the difference: 1981, 6.6%; 9.7% in 1982—that was the recession; 10.3; then it begins to drop: nine, eight, seven, six, five, five. In 1989, it was 5%—this is from your government document—in 1990, 6.3. Then we start to run into the problems. In 1991, 9.6%, and then, as the budget points out, 14%, not getting below 12% even in 1996. You can go back decades and you will find no period in time when we have gone through literally five and six years of unemployment rates of 10%, 11%, 12%, 13%, 14%.

1640

Interjection: And to be maintained.

Mr Phillips: That's right. My colleague says, "And to be maintained."

Mr Peter North (Elgin): Tell us when free trade started.

Mr Phillips: The member opposite is saying, "Tell us when free trade started." I'll make two points on that. One is that free trade has been national, and Ontario in 1989, in 1990, had the lowest rate of unemployment in the country. Everybody had free trade at the same time, but now we find British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba with substantially lower rates of unemployment than Ontario. New Brunswick, and we think of the Maritimes as having chronic challenges with unemployment, and that's been the case; there have been times when New Brunswick's unemployment rate has been better than Ontario's in the last 12 months.

Interjection.

Mr Phillips: As the member across barracks, I would say that the government itself has pointed out the horrendous problem. The most amazing thing to me is that I can't imagine why the NDP backbenchers aren't up and down the backs of the cabinet on this. I can't imagine why. I can't imagine one single labour person in this province who finds it acceptable to predict unemployment rates by 1996 running at 12%. It is a disgrace. I've no idea why the back bench isn't all over

the cabinet. I think our fiscal problems are challenging, but the real issue for the people out there is unemployment and jobs, and it is a tragic, tragic problem.

Furthermore, as I say, it is unique. In previous times we've seen unemployment get up to 10%, but then it begins to improve, and those people who are talented, want to work, get a sense of hope and can find a job. There's no question that we're going to find literally hundreds of thousands of people who are talented but won't be able to find a job.

So what's the solution here? This is where I get to OTAB, which is the bill we are being cut off from debating. Here's the problem with OTAB. Fundamentally, I believe that education truly is a lifelong experience. I think it truly needs to be, to use today's jargon, seamless.

I am convinced that we are in an era of constant change. I know that sounds like a cliché, but not many of us have really internalized that. We use the term, "We're into a period of restructuring," as if it has an end to it, and there is no end to restructuring now. We make a mistake when we think this is a phase that we'll go through and then we'll structure and then we'll be fine. We are now into constant change.

That's a very unsettling thing for most of us, because most of us need stability in our life. That's why for many, a lifelong job has provided enormous stability. We're going to see less and less of that. I happen to think we're going to have to find other vehicles to help provide community stability, because job stability, just by the very nature of the pace of change, is going to be less frequent.

But my point is that on the education and training side of things, we do need it to be absolutely seamless. If you are a 30-year-old person in the workplace and, for whatever reason, your job has disappeared, you should have a seamless opportunity to get back into a form of education and then back into the workplace.

The problem with OTAB—and I feel like I'm always speaking to the government backbenchers, because the cabinet, I think, tends to have its mind made up. I would challenge the backbench members to look at the governance of OTAB. This is the fundamental issue with OTAB and why we need a debate.

OTAB, for those of you who are watching, will have a 22-person board. These 22 people will not be selected by the government. They won't be selected by the government. The minister raises her eyebrows, but they won't be selected by the government. They won't be selected by the public. They are going to be appointed by interest groups. Interest groups are part of the public, but I don't believe the business community—I believe the business community speaks for the business community and I understand that, but it doesn't speak for the whole public.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): You were Minister of Labour. Did you change the structure of the compensation board?

Mr Phillips: There's another member barracking, because they don't like to hear a sensible debate; they can't stand it.

This board will not be a public board. There will be a series of special interest groups that will make the appointments. Special interest groups understandably speak for themselves; I understand that. But something as fundamental as all the workplace training, all the skill development, all literacy programs, all the workplace adjustment programs, all the training programs, all the apprenticeship programs, will not be in the public's hands.

Mr Perruzza: Is that what you did with the compensation board?

Mr Phillips: He's barracking again. They will not be in the public's hands. Twenty-two people appointed by special interest groups will rule it; not even appointed by the Legislature but by special interest groups. Those 22 people speak for a part of the public, but they don't speak for the public.

Mr North: Identify some of the groups.

Mr Phillips: The member says, "Identify them." I said the business community. The business community will appoint eight people on that board. The business community speaks for the business and that's fine, but it doesn't speak for the whole public.

So we're making a huge mistake. This is going to be what's called a schedule 4 agency. It's an independent, arm's-length agency. It'll make its own decisions. It's like the Workers' Compensation Board. Oftentimes the question is asked here of the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Labour will get up and say: "I'm sorry, but the workers' compensation is an independent agency that runs its own affairs. Sorry, I can't do anything about it."

Something as fundamental as all of the things I've talked about, which are absolutely at the centre of our future economy, will be in the hands of 22 people, not even selected by the public but selected and appointed by special interest groups.

Look at what the special interest groups have said. They've said: "We're going to have to caucus our position. We're going to have to take our caucused position to the table. We're going to have to ensure that the position we take at the OTAB table reflects"—

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If this government's going to move closure, the least it could do is keep a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum now is present. The honourable member for Scarborough-Agincourt can continue his debate.

1650

Mr Phillips: For the people who are viewing this, they should realize that what we're dealing with is a bill that will end up with an agency that will have responsibility for a budget of about \$600 million, going to \$2 billion. They will have all of the workplace training, all of the skills development, all of the what's called worker adjustment programs. It will be central, all of the apprenticeship programs, all of the things we talk about as we talk about helping develop the skills for the future. Those responsibilities will rest with this board.

I go back to saying, who will make those decisions? Firstly, it is clear in the legislation that it won't be the public making the decisions. It will be this independent, arm's-length body with 22 people and the groups. There are eight from the business community, eight from the labour community, one from the racial minority community, one from the women's community, one from the disabled community, one from the francophone community, one from colleges and universities and one from elementary-secondary. Each of them has a constituency. There's no doubt about that. But the collection of that 22 doesn't represent the collection of the public.

I say to the members that if you look at how those groups are talking about working on this Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, they no doubt view it as a great opportunity, because they all are going to caucus their position and take it to the table. This body of 22 people will be trying to get the agenda of their organizations done.

But I would say to you that if you believe that the collection of those groups represents Ontario, all of Ontario, all of the people, I think you're wrong. The business community represents the business community—and great—but there's an awful lot more out there who aren't represented on the board.

Furthermore, as we're trying to develop this—I use the expression "seamless"—so that we break down these barriers between elementary and secondary, secondary and the colleges, colleges and the universities, the workplace and the places of learning, surely the whole purpose of what we're trying to do is to take advantage of scarce resources and make them so interchangeable that we eliminate waste, we eliminate bureaucracy.

But now, just as we're trying to do those sorts of things, we're setting up a whole new, brand-new bureaucracy with, in my opinion, no accountability. As we will be doing in the House in the future, we'll say, "How is it that our industries are not finding the skill

levels they need?" The answer will be, "I'm sorry, but that's OTAB's problem." If we want to change OTAB, we change legislation.

The members may say, "We have a memorandum of understanding." I was the Minister of Labour. I know the relationship between the Workers' Compensation Board and the Ministry of Labour. There is a memorandum of understanding that essentially says, "Keep your nose out of Workers' Compensation because it's an independent, arm's-length agency." That's what the memorandum says, and that's what the OTAB legislation calls for.

What's happening with OTAB is that the objectives are right. All of us salute and applaud the need to improve skills development. All of us applaud the need to get partnerships working better together. All of us applaud the need to eliminate duplication. There can be no question.

By the way, there are all sorts of duplication in programs out there that we have to fix. But in the interest of doing all the things that are strategically right, the mechanism we've chosen will be seen in the future as a fundamental mistake.

I come back to why we're spending time today debating this motion: because it is an illustration of how we are being cut off from an important debate. The reason the committee moved it here, for what's called the legislative committee, for what's called a debate in committee of the whole—and I mention these things because maybe people who are watching may not be familiar with the terminology. But committee of the whole is an opportunity for all the members in the Legislature to participate in a debate around a bill and get into some comment and some discussion on it.

This motion today eliminates any of that debate, just terminates it completely, and then it eliminates virtually any debate at third reading. I think it's important for the public to appreciate what's happening.

As I said earlier, the government, for whatever reason, came back three weeks late, almost four weeks late. Had they come back on time, we would have had almost a month more of debate. This particular bill, I think, requires the kind of airing that we'd hoped to see at committee of the whole. This isn't a minor bill.

As a matter of fact, interestingly enough, when the Premier was asked to rate his best accomplishment in his first year, what do you think it was? OTAB. That indicates how important they view this, but they won't allow a significant, meaningful debate on it. He says this is the most important thing. He says this is crucial to our economy. He says that this is something that he views as his most important accomplishment, but he won't allow debate here on the bill.

I know it doesn't seem important to the cabinet, because it just wants to get it through and get out of

here. It may not seem important to the government back bench, for whatever reason. I don't know why it isn't, because if I were you, I would be all over the cabinet on many of the things that are happening. I would be all over the cabinet on how you could ever live with, as the budget itself says, a 1993 unemployment rate of 14%. I have no idea how you would allow a budget to go through with a passing comment, "The unemployment rate will be 14% in this province in 1993," and not be all over the cabinet.

I know when we went out talking on the budget that the labour movement, I think, finds it particularly galling to have to defend the government where the unemployment rates are at that level. I don't think there's any labour leader in this province who ever thought he would have to defend a budget, as I say, with 14% unemployment; three years from now, 1996, at 12%, and yet they are put in the position of having to defend it.

As I say, on the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, do you really think that the groups that are now going to be responsible for managing this board without—the government, the public, will not even have a chance to choose them. They will be chosen by their constituents. Those are important constituents, and I don't want to underestimate that. I don't want the business community to get mad when I say that they don't represent all the public, and I don't want the labour movement to get mad when I say they don't represent all the public either. But there are more than just the eight groups that are represented on OTAB. Eight groups are represented on OTAB; there's more to Ontario than just them.

There's all the young people. Where's their voice?

Mr North: Analyse the unemployment in the province. Tell us why it is our fault.

Mr Phillips: The member across, I think he said, "Tell us what you would do." I know exactly what we would do. This is very simple. You make this an advisory board, but in the final analysis, these decisions should rest with the public. The member shakes his head, but I believe that. I just don't believe that the public wants to turn over or should turn over to an independent agency, with special-interest groups as important as they are there—and if you look at how they're going to approach OTAB, they view it as taking their agenda there. They're going to have to caucus it and they're going to have to work on it. I'm afraid what we're going to find in about two years is that the thing will have bogged down, that there will be so many arguments around agendas and not enough debate around how we are going to solve the problems.

1700

I'll use the Workplace Health and Safety Agency as an example. For those of you who may not be familiar with it, the Workplace Health and Safety Agency has a

similar format. It is a schedule 4 agency. It's an independent one. In this particular case, the Workplace Health and Safety Agency has two sides: labour and management. They are there representing their constituencies. It's not working on something as important as health and safety.

On that one I have some experience. It was as a result of a bill that I brought in. I didn't bring it in, it was the previous minister, but I was the Minister of Labour. There was a worry that we had on that one. That's why we put in an independent chair. We said, "At least, we'll have an independent chair there." But the agency, for whatever reason, got rid of the independent chair and now we've seen just an enormous friction between the two parties. Rather than its being a productive relationship, my fear is that it has become a non-productive relationship.

The reason I raise that is that, as people often say, "If you don't understand the past, you're bound to repeat the mistakes of the past." We're bound to repeat a mistake and we can see it coming.

The solution is not that difficult. The solution in this particular case is comparatively easy, but for whatever reason the government wants to force this through and stop the debate. The government House leader threw out a bunch of threats, "We'll get you if you don't agree to these sorts of things," and soured the relationship—not particularly helpful. People don't respond well to threats, but if he wants to threaten us, that's fine.

But I use the example again of the sorts of things that we in the opposition are trying to do to be helpful. I used the example at the start of my remarks of one bill that I'm involved in, called the capital corporations act. I begged the government to bring it forward six months ago so we could have a legitimate debate. What happened? It was dumped on that table quietly, less than 48 hours before the budget. I'll tell you the magnitude of that particular bill. It will handle all of the borrowing for the province, \$80 billion, which, by the way, is going to be turned over to an independent, schedule 4, arm's length agency.

The government seems to love these things. I have some suspicions why. All the money for it is going to be borrowed by the school boards. If there is one group out there that is having difficulty right now, it is our municipal partners, because they've been hit with the expenditure control program and the social contract. Then they got hit with all the taxes. Yet what are we going to do? We're going to make them go out and borrow another \$600 million a year for the province. It's amazing.

Mr Owens: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm interested in the member's comments with respect to capital corps. This is not the issue under discussion. I wish the member to get back to the point under debate.

Mr Phillips: The reason I raise this is because the House leader, in introducing this motion, got all agitated and animated and accused the opposition of not being helpful. That was the motive for introducing it: "We have to get on with the business. The opposition isn't being helpful."

The reason I raise the capital corporations is as but one example where the opposition said six months ago: "For heaven's sake, bring us the legislation. Allow us the debate. Give us the time to debate." I think deliberately, totally deliberately, those bills were dropped on this table less than two days before the budget. We've had virtually no time to debate them, and that's why, when the public wonders why we're having a debate about this, it is because in our opinion the government is trying to ram its legislation through and not give the public an opportunity for legitimate debate.

On this particular bill, this OTAB bill, I am letting the public know how important it is, because every single person out there who is out of work, this is going to be the agency that will be doing the training. Every single person in the future who may be laid off, this is the agency that will be doing the workplace adjustment, all of the apprenticeship programs, \$2 billion—in my opinion, \$2 billion worth of expenditures, and it will be controlled by special-interest groups, albeit well-meaning special-interest groups, albeit important special-interest groups. But I add up the special-interest groups and, in total, they don't speak for the people of Ontario. They speak for an important part of the people of Ontario but not all of Ontario.

As I move to conclusion, the members opposite and the public—I think the public understand now why we feel the way we do about this motion. The intent of the motion is to stop debate. The intent of the motion is to not allow the public to have a full airing of this bill. It is what Premier Rae called his most important accomplishment, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, and yet, for his most important accomplishment, the opposition does not get an opportunity to have legitimate debate on it.

Mr Stockwell: We're at this stage in today's business because it's some kind of punishment levelled out by the House leader for the government side. This punishment was because this official opposition party had the nerve to ask this government to adhere to the rules of debate in this House. I want to speak to that issue just briefly at the start of my comments.

It's rather clear in the rules of debate in this House that when introducing a bill, certain rules must be followed. They're not complicated rules. They're not difficult rules. They're not onerous rules. They're rules that allow the opposition parties an opportunity to understand and read what the government is planning to put forward on that day's agenda, and when introducing the bills, it gives the government members and the

opposition members time to review what introduction is being made by the minister on that day.

Now, if you go to the rules and procedures, the standing orders, you'll note on page 32, number 38, section (c): "On the introduction of a government bill, a compendium of background information shall be delivered to the opposition critics." It's very clearly "shall." It's not "may." It's not "might." It's not "We will if we get it off the photocopier in time." It's "shall be delivered to the opposition critics."

"If it is an amending bill, an up-to-date consolidation of the act or acts to be amended shall be delivered to the opposition critics unless the bill amends an act amended previously in the session." That doesn't apply. So the very simple fact is that if the members opposite would take the time to read the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly, they would see on page 32, section 38(c), "On the introduction of a government bill, a compendium of background information shall be delivered to the opposition critics."

The Minister of Transportation stood in this House and announced he was introducing a bill on transportation and traffic. We in the opposition benches had absolutely no idea what bill was being introduced. None. I put it to you, Mr Speaker: absolutely no idea. Now, the House leader on the government side stood up and tried to offer some kind of pale excuse that he delivered them to the House leaders of the two opposition parties at 9:30 this morning, which was in fact a lie, did not happen, did not take place. Then he tried to suggest that the compendium to the bill was in fact delivered to the caucuses previous to the bill being read, which was again untrue, not factual.

1710

So we in opposition were left in the unenviable position of asking the minister of the crown what bill he was introducing. I will say right now, I asked the minister five or six times, once he had read the title of that piece of legislation, "What exactly are you introducing?" The minister didn't answer. He had not delivered the compendium notes. The House leader for the government side didn't deliver the compendium notes at 9:30 in the morning, which he alleges he did, and of course we know now he didn't. Then we simply asked the minister, "Could you please just tell us what you're introducing?" and he ignored us.

We divided on the vote because we wanted to know what we were voting on. At no time had we received the compendium notes. We stood in this House and voted against the legislation that was being introduced for first reading simply because we didn't know what was being introduced. Then, after a five-minute bell, after the vote had been taken, the compendium notes suddenly appeared on our side of this House.

We're now suffering the rage of the mighty House leader for the government side; mighty, I might add, in

his own mind. He says, "If you don't cooperate, I'm going to change the orders of the day and move closure on the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board," as some kind of punishment, as some kind of penalty to the opposition, because they had the nerve to ask what they were supposed to be voting on. That's why we're here today, because the opposition had the nerve to ask the government what bill was being introduced and what we were voting on at that point in time.

It's just unbelievable that this government, which wants to get a social contract with 950,000 of the broader public sector, can't even deliver compendium notes on time. So now we're suffering for this pique of anger suffered by the House leader for the government side.

I say to you in the chair, Mr Speaker, I have absolutely no idea how the ruling came down the way it came down. I have no idea how the ruling was made from the Chair that suggested the bill was in fact in order. It was never in order. We never received the compendium notes, and it says, as I said earlier, on page 32, "38(c) On the introduction of a government bill"—which this was—"a compendium of background information shall be delivered to the opposition critics." "Shall."

Mr Paul Klopp (Huron): Are you still on that?

Mr Stockwell: I find it quite important.

Well, the minister introduced the bill. We didn't have the compendium notes before he introduced the bill. We had a five-minute bell and we still didn't have the compendium notes. We had a vote and we still didn't have the compendium notes. So we're here today because they can't do their job, a simple job, I might add, a simple task.

Mr Klopp: It's for a simple Tory party.

Mr Stockwell: The member from Huron's babbling over on that side. He doesn't clearly understand the issue so he'll babble incessantly. I'll have to put up with it.

A simple task that I thought even the simplest of governments could do. Well, I overestimated them. Hard to believe that you could do it, but I actually overestimated this crowd. I figured they could even deliver compendium notes on time, and they couldn't even do that.

But what adds insult to injury—I'm on the motion; we're on this motion today; you can check Hansard—because the House leader for the government side stood up and said, "Unless you people opposite straighten up and do as I tell you, I'm going to move closure on OTAB." So I'm on agenda here. I'm on the issue. Why are we on OTAB? Because apparently we weren't prepared to vote on an issue that we didn't have compendium notes for or knew anything about. That's why we're here debating OTAB and closure on OTAB.

To add, as I was saying, insult to injury, this minister—let me just outline this for you. We didn't have the compendium notes, he read the legislation into the record, and I asked him five or six times, "What is that bill?" and he ignored me. I shouted across: "What is the bill you're reading? Is that the speeding photo bill, about photographing licence plates for speeding tickets?" He ignored me. During the five-minute bell, two of our members crossed the floor and asked him point-blank, "Is this the bill you're introducing?" He didn't answer.

So what position were we left in, except to stand on a point of order and rule that the bill is in fact out of order? And we got the most insane, absurd ruling from the Chair that said in fact it was in order because the House leader stood up and made up some concocted story that he delivered them at 9:30 in the morning. Unless he knows about the secret passages that the ex-House leader knew about, there isn't a way he delivered them at 9:30. No House leader's office received them, and now we're faced with this situation today.

It may make the opposite members somewhat restless, but those are the facts. They didn't receive the compendium notes at 9:30. We didn't receive the compendium notes till after the vote. It may be uncomfortable, I might add, for them, but you're incompetent. You can't even deliver compendium notes, let alone get a social contract, let alone run a province, let alone balance a budget. You can't even perform the simplest of chores: delivering compendium notes, the simplest of chores.

We had a long harangue, we went past 4 of the clock, and this is the punishment. The government House leader's punishment is, "Well, I'll move closure on OTAB." Now we have closure on OTAB. This is a practice that this government is becoming rather expert at. There are two practices they're becoming expert at: alienating anybody who has ever had any intention of ever voting for them and bringing in closure motions.

Now we have a closure motion on maybe one of the most important pieces of legislation that this government has staked a claim on: the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. By moving this closure motion, we as the third party will not be given the opportunity to move many of our amendments that I have in my hand, many of the amendments that are practical, reasonable and acceptable to the public outside of this place.

Considering the fact we don't have a committee of the whole, as I'm sure they'll take away that opportunity, and considering the fact that we don't have an opportunity on third reading to debate this, there's nothing left for us to do than simply argue our points during closure.

Mr Perruzza: Hey, Chris, how long are you going to speak for? How long?

Mr Stockwell: The cackling from Downsview continues. I'm most interested to find out if he got his Toronto Blue Jays signs up. He still hasn't told us, but we'll find out. Certainly, the burning issue in that NDP caucus is Toronto Blue Jays signs as you enter Metropolitan Toronto.

But I think the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board is fairly important myself, too. It's something that I'm sure this member doesn't think, because otherwise he wouldn't be supporting this government's action in moving closure on the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board one day, and the very day before, moving closure on the insurance bill.

But this was the government of the little people. This was the government of the underdog. This is the government of closure; professionals on closure. Closure is all we get from this government. If debate goes too long, becomes too intensive, if amendments are too difficult: closure. "If you don't do as we tell you, if we break the rules and you have the nerve to suggest we broke them," move closure. "If you don't like the way we introduce bills because you don't know anything about them and we're asking you to vote on something you haven't read," move closure. And after it's all done, have the House leader stand up in a pique of frustration, suggesting, "If you don't hurry up, I'm going to move closure." Petulance from an incompetent government trying to run this House by incompetent means.

1720

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Do we like Dave Cooke.

Mr Stockwell: That's the thing that is hard to believe, I say to the member in the Liberal Party.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I wouldn't be House leader if I was paid to be.

Mr Stockwell: You were paid to be House leader, Mr Cooke.

So in a pique of anger, we now move closure on OTAB, this structural linchpin in this party's plan to put the people of the province of Ontario back to work, the linchpin, that has taken how long to get through this Legislature with little or any debate? How long? How long has it taken to get it through this Legislature with little or any debate? Closure on third reading.

You know, they can't deliver compendium notes, they can't get legislation through, they can't keep their party members in line on votes, their House leader's moving closure, and it's all the fault of the opposition parties. It's time this government looked in the mirror and accepted some responsibility.

Again we see today, with the Premier making his announcement on the social contract, the incompetence of this government, the thorough and absolutely incompetent way it's running this province. They're suggest-

ing that they have a three-legged stool. Their announcement so far is a one-legged stool. The leg is taxing the taxpayers \$2 billion.

Mr Speaker, I think we should have a quorum if we're going to debate this issue.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Is there a quorum in the House?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals: Mr Speaker, a quorum is not present.

The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is present. The member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: Well, third call for quorum. They move closure; they can't keep quorum. They want to debate OTAB; they can't keep quorum. They move closure on the insurance bill; they can't keep quorum.

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): I see you have a tremendous amount of support.

Mr Stockwell: I've got a tremendous amount, sir, a tremendous amount. You know, when I go out on the road to speak to the public, there's a tremendous amount of support for this party out there. When I looked at the last polls at Don Mills and St George-St David, I saw the kind of support your party had: 8%. You're a frivolous party, you're frivolous. You're a third party; you're fourth. You're irrelevant. I've seen higher standings by parties that were patched together in a couple of weeks, so don't talk to me about support. There's no support for your party out there. If we had any way of impeaching you people, the public would be doing it right now. Don't tell me about support. You can't even count to 20 to keep a quorum in here. Support: I get a laugh about that. You can't even keep the support of your union representatives at GM. "Checkoff" used to mean money to you people; now all it is, is a character on Star Trek.

Interjections.

Mr Stockwell: I didn't think it was bad.

So we move into the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Give him a glass of water.

Mr Stockwell: I won't respond to the member from Durham, because he's offering me a glass of water, unlike many other occasions.

Mr Wiseman: I've offered you many things, but water's the only thing you've taken.

Mr Stockwell: Yes, that's true.

Amendments, amendments that we wanted to put to OTAB, very reasonable amendments, amendments that the public was asking us to present, amendments that

won't now see the light of day because in a pique of anger the House leader for the government side decides that he doesn't like the way this place is operating. He doesn't like our attitude, so he moves closure on OTAB.

We wanted to move that there shall be 27 directors appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows:

—Nine directors representing business, three of whom shall represent the industrial sector, three the service sector and three the construction sector.

—Nine directors representing labour, three of whom shall represent the industrial sector, three the service sector, three the construction sector.

—Five directors representing educators and trainers, one of whom shall represent school boards, community colleges, universities, private sector trainers and one community-based trainer.

—One director representing francophones, one representing persons with disabilities, one representing racial minorities and one representing women.

We consider that to be a reasonable amendment. The amendment expands the board of directors to 27 seats to ensure that business, labour and education and social groups are fairly represented.

That was a reasonable amendment. It's an amendment that I think should see the light of day. It's an amendment the public should probably see a vote taken on, but no, we won't see that amendment. Why? Because in a pique of anger the House leader decides he doesn't like how this is going so he moves closure on the linchpin to building this province back to prosperity.

Although not specified in the legislation, the government has indicated that the Ontario Federation of Labour will be given seven of the eight labour seats on OTAB. The building trades council will be given the eighth seat. Perfect buyoff; no doubt about it. We wanted to debate that in this amendment, because you tried to buy off labour: You tried to buy off labour with Bill 40; you tried to buy off labour with OTAB. What have you found out? You can't buy them off. They sold you down the river on the social contract. You couldn't get a deal. You thought you could cosy up to them and they would allow you to reopen the contracts and strip them and roll back wages. You couldn't get a deal.

So now we go through this harangue today by your leader, who's rudderless, seeking any direction in hopes of saving \$2 billion. We're going to be halfway through the fiscal year, two thirds of the way through the municipal year, and you've come up with another concocted plan that hasn't got, in my opinion, a prayer of succeeding unless you reopen the contracts and strip back the wages, and I don't think the unions are going to buy into that.

I'll look forward to that day when I can look across the floor and see Mr Owens from Scarborough Centre

voting to reopen contracts, something no Liberal or Tory government has done, something this government will be very proud of, I'm sure: reopening collective agreements and clawing back negotiated settlements. I'll be very interested to see that day this good union man, this man who has negotiated contracts—

Mr Owens: What about Tory pension clawbacks?

Mr Stockwell: I don't want to hear your heckling; I want to see how you vote.

Mr Owens: At least I have beliefs.

Mr Stockwell: I want to see how you vote. I want to see how close you hold to your heart the beliefs of the labour social movement, because I think you're going to be bought off, bought off by an MPP's salary and as chairman of caucus. I think that's all it takes to buy you off and that you'll vote to reopen contracts and roll back wages.

I want to be here when that happens, because I recall vividly a number of these people, when in opposition, mouthing the wonderful words, talking about the fairness of collective agreements, the fact that they can't be attacked, collective agreements that are agreed to by management and unions.

I'll be here that day when this union man stands up and votes to reopen those collective agreements and roll back wages. I'll be here that day. It will be an interesting day, because anything you've stood for will be flushed down the toilet. It won't be worth anything, because you'll have just gone against every principle you ever stood for, collective agreements, union-negotiated collective agreements that you'll reopen and strip away.

That will be the final day and the death-knell for this government because every union in this province will find it as abhorrent as you would have found it had you not been elected and bought off on an MPP's salary.

I move on about the labour situation in OTAB. We won't get a chance to introduce that bill.

Mr David Winninger (London South): Sold any cars lately?

Mr Stockwell: Excuse me?

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): He wants to know how the car business is going.

Mr Stockwell: He asks me if I've sold any cars lately. There's an interjection from the brilliant member from London.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The Chair is trying to be as patient as possible. I would just ask that you speak on the motion itself, please. Please do.

1730

Mr Stockwell: Thank you, Mr Speaker. So, the member for London, I'll fill you in later if you want. I can't imagine why that would be of any great interest to you, but I'm certain there are a lot of things that I can't

believe are of great interest to you. I'll move on to this—

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: And here's the member from Durham. I've got to have a lot of respect. This guy keeps coming back. It's great, and I'll leave him alone this time because I'm charitable today.

We wanted to move an amendment to OTAB. It said, "In the selection of directors representing labour, the importance of reflecting the proportions of Ontario's labour force that work in organized and unorganized workplaces shall be recognized."

You see, 65% of the workers in this province don't belong to a union. They're happily employed outside the union ranks. Maybe Mr Owens will be one of them after the next election. But these people are happily employed outside of the ranks and they don't want to belong to unions. They don't like unions. They don't think unions represent them. But according to this amendment, what we're trying to do is ensure that organized labour does not dominate the labour representation on the board.

Now, you see, this is a very important amendment. This amendment speaks for 65% of the people out there who work in this province—who are left working in this province after this debacle of a government. So we wanted to move this amendment, but, no, we don't get a chance, because in a pique of anger the House leader decides he's moving closure on OTAB as well as insurance, because they can't get their compendium notes delivered on time. That's why we're debating this today and that's why 65% of the people in this province, who are working hard for their money, paying hard-earned taxes, have no voice on OTAB, because they don't get the payoffs; only organized labour gets the payoffs, and if they want to get on OTAB, it's implicit in this legislation that you'd better organize. The biggest union after the next election will be the union of ex-NDP MPPs. They'll organize and get involved in OTAB. That'll be the biggest adjustment that will have to be made after the election.

So here we have it. Here we have this government suggesting that it represents the broader public in the province of Ontario, yet you don't allow 65% of the people who work in this public access to the board that makes decisions on training and education. Is that fair and equitable? I say not, and the 65% of the people who don't get a chance to sit on this board say not as well; that it's dogmatic, socialist pap.

Mr Wiseman: How would you pick? How many would be on the board if you put all 65% of the population on the board?

Mr Stockwell: The member says, "How would you pick?" Well, how would you pick? The member from Durham suggests to me how I would pick who would

be on the board. Well, I'll answer the question. It's very simple. You get a broad cross-section of the public—

Mr Winninger: Of Tories.

Mr Stockwell: And here's the member from London chiming in again in his—

The Deputy Speaker: I would ask you, please, to refrain from asking questions. This is not the time for you to ask questions. The member for Etobicoke West has the floor. Only he has the floor. The member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: I think it's important to ask questions about this, but they've closed; they've moved closure. I think it's important that you too should have an opportunity to ask some questions on this bill, but now that's removed because in a pique of anger your House leader decides he doesn't want to do it because he can't deliver his compendium notes on time. It's a shame you can't get those simple questions answered, because as simple members, you should get some simple questions answered, and it's a shame.

The point made is that 65% of the unorganized labour force out there is unrepresented. Organized labour will have a major role in shaping the province's future training programs, as they've been allocated eight seats on the board. The Ontario Federation of Labour has been allocated seven seats, while the Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council has one seat.

To make this point, you asked the Christian Labour Association of Canada and they stated—and it's a very fair and reasonable comment. I ask the members opposite to listen. They said, "The real concern for all of us should be, can the OFL and the building trade council, in view of their philosophy and track record, be expected to act evenhandedly and in the best interests of approximately 65% of Ontario workers, who do not want to belong to these organizations' affiliated unions? Peeling away the rhetoric about a new era in labour relations, broad consultations, public involvement, cooperation and partnership, what is there on the public record that reassures us these labour representatives indeed can put self-interest aside and have progressive ideas about what it might take for the province to remain as efficient, productive and competitive as it can be in a global economic environment?"

That's a fair question. That's a fair comment. That's a question that should be answered. That's an amendment that should be voted on. But no, we can't vote on that now, because you didn't deliver the compendium notes on time. That's why we can't vote on this. That's a fair question, put to this government by 65% of the workers in this province, 65%, and they don't answer.

Mr North: Who are represented on the board.

Mr Stockwell: Who are not represented on the board. Not represented on the board. And if you consider the broader public sector, the broader public out

there, to be represented on this board, to be done through business, it's simply not the case. Business is the business groups, or the disabled, or women, or visible minorities. No, they don't represent the public; they're interest groups. They're special interest groups. Of course they are. If they weren't, they wouldn't be on the board. Of course they are. Anyone who suggests otherwise is living in a dream world. They're not the broader public section; that's not the cross-section of the public. Those are special interest groups put on by you, the government, while 65% of nonunionized labour out there has no say. That's reasonable? That's fair? That's unbelievable.

I'm still waiting—I want to hear the member from Scarborough Centre when he strips away the rights, the collective agreements, when he rolls back wages. I want to see him dangle his union card in front of his friends out front when he votes that way, for an MPP's salary and a chairman of caucus. That will be a real interesting day. That will be a good day. You should be proud of yourself when you do that. Come Monday, you should be proud of yourself for everything you've stood for when you do that. That will be a red-letter day in your household, I'm sure, when you can stand up and say: "I'm quashing unions in the province of Ontario. I'm stripping away rights. I'm reopening collective agreements. I've forgotten anything I stood for, because when I got this job, I sold my soul." That's what he's doing. "I sold it, for an MPP's salary and a chair of caucus."

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Perruzza: Mr Speaker, you either bring him back to his senses or bring him in line.

The Deputy Speaker: Please. You don't have the floor.

Mr Stockwell: There are many union representatives over there who I think will have a very interesting time on Monday when the legislation is introduced. I look across and I see the member from Sarnia; he'll have a real interesting time voting on that piece of legislation, and of course the member from Scarborough, and of course the teachers' union, the member from Durham. He'll have a great delight in reopening the contracts and rolling back the wages on the teachers, considering what you stood for in the past. But it's probably less of a problem for you, since you've agreed to put a dump in your own backyard and you got elected on the fact you wouldn't put a dump in your own backyard. So I look across at all these people and it's of great interest that they'll have to in fact vote to reopen contracts, claw back wages, negotiated settlements.

The third amendment that I wanted to speak to today was a reasonable amendment put forward by our critic, Ms Cunningham, who would have been here today to debate this, although it wasn't on the order paper, but

she's out speaking to a group of young people about OTAB at this very moment.

Mr Winninger: Who is your choice for leader?

Mr Wiseman: He's not going.

Mr Stockwell: But they now have moved the agenda around, so it didn't give our critic an opportunity.

Mr Perruzza: He doesn't want the Tories to get re-elected. That's right. I had heard that too. He doesn't want them to get re-elected because he's afraid it's going to bring him down.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Downsview. The member for Etobicoke West, I would ask you to address your remarks to the Chair.

Mr Stockwell: I am doing my best. They missed lunch, I guess.

Mr Owens: Speaking of being out to lunch.

1740

Mr Stockwell: There goes the member from Scarborough, who will probably vote to strip away rights, collective agreements that you negotiated that you're going to take back from your brothers and sisters. Let's talk about that. What a proud day it will be—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Owens: The member is being provocative.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Scarborough Centre.

Mr Stockwell: They can't keep a quorum. They heckle to the point of having to sit down. They can't keep a quorum. They move closure two days in a row on two very important pieces of legislation. This government is not only incompetent—well, completely incompetent; they don't even have the courtesy to allow us the short time we have to debate an important piece of legislation like OTAB.

Mr Perruzza: Why do you do this then?

Mr Stockwell: Here they go again. Again, it's the member from Downsview and the member from Scarborough, Steve Owens, continuing on in this barracking that's taking place. I wish they'd listen up, because these are really important amendments that we're putting forward, amendments that should have been—

Mr Owens: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member has cited my name as barracking and making other inappropriate noises. Just to let Mr Stockwell—

The Deputy Speaker: This is not a point of order. It's not a point of order. Please address the Chair, the member for Etobicoke West, and try to ignore the interjections.

Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, I'm doing my best.

Another amendment that we wanted to put that now won't be put, because in a pique of anger the House leader—

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: He's acting like a mouse now. It's play time in the NDP caucus.

Now we have Ms Cunningham's amendment, which won't be heard, as I said, because in a pique of anger—they couldn't deliver the compendium notes on time—they get upset, so they move closure.

In the subsection for quorum, "14 directors, five of whom represent business and five of whom represent labour, are required to constitute a quorum."

"Decision-making

"A decision of the directors requires the approval of 14 directors, five of whom represent business and five of whom represent labour."

We know it's a slanted committee. We know it's a slanted board put in with the eye to union-labour deal-making, and we speak to it, and the people should have an opportunity to see a vote take place on this.

The amendment adds a double-majority voting requirement to Bill 96:

"A proposal before the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board would have to be supported by a majority of both business and labour and a majority of the complete board."

That way you don't have the union, which has a majority, steamrolling over business, steamrolling over this 65% not attending, steamrolling over the members who don't happen to agree with the labour-union doctorate.

But, no, that amendment won't be heard either. Why? Because we're moving closure again, closure by a government that gets upset when they don't follow the rules and we tell them they don't.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): Why do we have to listen to this dogmatic drivel?

Mr Stockwell: Well, you know, it's not dogmatic drivel any more, I say to the Minister of Environment and Energy, because it's going to be non-dogmatic come Monday when you vote to reopen all the collective agreements in the province and roll back the wages and strip any gains that they've made. Yes, it won't be dogmatic. You'll have changed your stripes considerably at that point. You'll have outdone Conrad Black. He couldn't even do that. You'll have outdone him. You'll have reopened 9,000 collective agreements, clawed back wages, clawed back benefits, and I think you should be proud of yourselves. I can imagine there will be a party awaiting for you outside this Legislature from all those union reps.

Interjection: Consider it fairminded.

Mr Stockwell: Yes, we would have been more considerate. We would have run this province so well that we wouldn't have had to do that.

Hon Mr Wildman: Oh, I see.

Mr Stockwell: Oh, without doubt.

Mr Perruzza: We're still cleaning up your mess. That's how well you ran it.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. There's only 15 minutes to go. Try to behave as well as you can, and I would ask the member for Etobicoke West to continue and address your remarks to the Chair. Try to ignore the interjection. The member for Downsview will remain quiet; I know he will. So address your remarks to me. Thank you.

Mr Stockwell: Okay, Mr Speaker. If you say he'll remain quiet, I believe you.

We talked about the double majority, something that should have been debated in this Legislature, something that should have been debated so that people could hear about the concerns we have with respect to double majority and the union monopolization of this board and the fact that they're going to ram through left-wing, socialist pap like this Legislature has been subjected to in the last two and a half years. Left-wing, socialist pap: \$10-billion deficits that ballooned to \$12 billion or \$13 billion; \$10-billion deficits that have ballooned to \$11 billion or \$12 billion.

Coming in now is the culprit, the Minister of Transportation—why we're here today. I'd still like an answer as to why he didn't tell us what bill he was introducing; why he could not have the compendium notes delivered; why, when the compendium notes weren't delivered, we had a five-minute bell and we voted and he still wouldn't tell us what we were voting on. This is the culprit.

The House leader, in a pique of anger, should have turned around and redressed the Minister of Transportation, but he didn't. He sat there, as we went across and asked him what the bill was about and he wouldn't answer. This is the same group that wants to run the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board and has a Minister of Transportation who is incapable of delivering compendium notes on time. This government gives the post office a good name.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): Maybe they should retrain these guys.

Mr Stockwell: Retrain to deliver compendium notes on time. There could be a course for that. I'm sure they'll think of it. They'll probably hire a lot of their socialist friends to run it and they still wouldn't get it right. The minister can't get his notes delivered on time to the members opposite—introduces a motion, won't tell them what the motion is.

Shame on you, Mr Minister, shame on you. Because of your petulant attitude, because you wouldn't tell us what the motion was all about, the legislation, your House leader in a pique of anger suggested that we now have to deal with a closure on OTAB because we dealt with closure on the insurance yesterday because we went past 4 o'clock.

Mr Perruzza: You're repetitive.

Mr Stockwell: Of course I am. We're upset.

Mr Perruzza: Of course you should be upset. You don't read your mail.

Mr Stockwell: I'm trying to get down, Mr Speaker, to the next amendment.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: If members would take their seats, perhaps we will have as much—the two ministers and the member for Elgin, if you want to take your seats, I'll wait for you. Please take your seats. I ask that all members take their seats. The member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: I'd like to move the amendment, but you know what also happens when they move closure because of the incompetence in the Minister of Transportation? You know what else happens when they move closure? There's no committee of the whole. There's no chance for questioning. There's no chance for give and take, for all these important issues to be put on the record. There's no chance for that.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): Or to convince them that they're wrong.

Mr Stockwell: I don't think you'll ever convince them they're wrong. The only people who'll convince them they're wrong is the electorate when they finish with them in 1995. It'll be a decimated lot sitting on this side of the House of maybe half a dozen that'll realize how badly strayed they were. In fact it's time to take pictures so they can remember each other by them.

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): A photo radar shot of the whole gang.

Mr Stockwell: A photo radar shot of the whole gang, exactly. After the next election, you won't need any wide-angle lens to get the entire caucus in the same picture, I might add.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): It will be used at random, Chris.

Mr Stockwell: I hear the Minister of Transportation barracking again. I only asked you one question today. Six times you wouldn't answer and you caused this mess because you were incapable of delivering compendium notes on time.

1750

The next section that we dealt with was a comprehensive section that clarified the relationship between OTAB and the local boards. Why we wanted to move

this amendment, for my friend from Downsview, was to ensure that the composition and operation of local boards is a local responsibility. That seems reasonable. It seems to me that in your home community you would like the local board to understand the problems in your community, to address the problems in your community, so we wanted a very definitive amendment that clarified the relationship between the local board and OTAB itself. But this won't be put on the agenda. It won't be put on the agenda because of the incompetence of the government in delivering compendium notes.

We have a fistful here. We wanted to strike out section 21 of Ontario Training and Adjustment Board Act. The amendment removes section 21 from the act. There's one reference to funding in the bill. This is very important about funding of this bill.

Section 21 states, "OTAB may charge fees for its services, in the amounts fixed by the regulations made under this act." But there is no definition for what type of fees would be levied. If that's not a blank cheque, what is?

You suggest that you can charge fees, but you're not telling anybody how much the fees are. It would seem reasonable to me that this amendment could be debated in this House, because people are going to have to pay those fees. Before you spend billions of dollars striking a board, maybe you'd better determine whether or not people are prepared to pay the kind of fees you're looking at.

But no, we can't debate that today, because the Minister of Transportation was incompetent and couldn't deliver his compendium notes on time, and in a fit of anger the House leader stood in this House and said, "You're not doing what I want you to do, so I'm going to move closure on OTAB." That's why we can't debate it. That's why 65% of the people in this province won't be represented on this board. That's why they're going to charge fees that they don't know about, that people will have to pay as a hidden tax. That's what we're debating here today. We're debating closure on the basic democratic right of debate, ability to debate a piece of legislation that is as large and controversial and comprehensive as this.

Hundreds of thousands of people in this province have voted for these two opposition parties to come here and debate these bills. You may not like what we have to say on occasion, but it doesn't give you the right to withdraw our opportunity to debate it.

Even the minister doesn't even understand what this debate is. It's closure. You're moving closure. You get it? Closure. I'm supposed to be debating the closure motion. You know? You don't even understand what you have before you.

Hon Mr Pouliot: You're the one who doesn't understand.

Mr Stockwell: Oh, no. Mr Speaker, I'm not even going to listen to the heckling from the Minister of Incompetence/Transportation, who can't even deliver compendium notes on time. I don't trust him to do anything. He's got a simple job like delivering the mail from that side of the House to this side of the House and he can't even get it done on time, and he wants me to listen to his barracking.

This is the dilemma that we face on this side of the House: many amendments, a fistful of amendments, reasonable amendments not accepted by this government because it moved closure.

Bill 96, on motion to be moved—in committee we wanted to move, by, again, our critic, who is now out speaking to a group of young people about this very piece of legislation and it won't be—

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): Why isn't your critic here?

Mr Stockwell: There's another member from Durham. I think he's the one who shared his apartment with the other member in case they got called back in a hurry to save the government. Don't worry, Durham. If they're counting on you to save them, they're out to lunch.

We moved that subsection 30(1) of the bill be amended by striking out clauses (a) and (b). What were (a) and (b)? This is the amendment that removes the regulatory powers associated with quorum and decision-making. The amendment is required if a double majority, voted requirement, amendment passes. It's a compendium motion to our original motion about a double majority.

There's a fistful here that the people won't be able to hear, reasonable amendments. These amendments were put to us by the public in a lot of instances. The public asked us to move these amendments. The public wanted these things debated. The public asked us to put to the government these reasonable amendments, and the government has quashed them. They've ignored them. They will not see the light of day.

Why? Because this was the government: That party in opposition was so opposed to any government that ever moved closure. Now they have the record. More often has this government moved closure than any other government in the history of this province, and in the meantime, it has changed the rules to restrict debate in this place to the shortest period of time possible.

Hon Mr Buchanan: Mulroney did it 21 times in three years.

Mr Stockwell: Again he quotes Mulroney. I guess they don't know the difference between the provincial Legislature and the federal Parliament. I said "in the province of Ontario."

Hon Mr Buchanan: I forgot you're going to get rid of him this weekend.

Mr Stockwell: This man is the Minister of Agriculture and Food and he doesn't know the difference between federal and—this man's likely to end up in Ottawa voting for Jim Edwards. This is what he's going to be doing this weekend. He is so confused, he's probably going to go to Ottawa and vote for Jim Edwards.

Hon Mr Buchanan: Two more days and he's off your back.

Mr Murdoch: Then who are you going to blame? Then you're going to have to blame yourself. There will be nobody else to blame.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Grey.

Mr Stockwell: There's one thing all the federal Tories can be proud of: In their own party, they're higher in the polls than you are with the general public.

So we have been left with this situation. But you know what is going to be interesting? Although they moved closure on insurance and although they moved closure on OTAB, we still are going to wait for this day on Monday when the Premier, according to his statement—I like these weasel words he uses. He won't say it. They won't cross his lips, but he's going to do it. They're weasel words. He hasn't got the guts to say it.

Mr Owens: You would know about weasels.

Mr Stockwell: Is that the member from Scarborough who said that, Mr Owens, who's going to vote to reopen collective agreements that you negotiated and roll back wages on your brothers and sisters?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Etobicoke West. We have two minutes to go. Please, let's see if we can maintain order for two minutes.

Mr Stockwell: Here are some weasel words. I note in the Premier's announcement, "compensation savings." What are compensation savings? They're rollbacks. That's when you break open collective agreements and roll back their wages. He calls them "compensation savings." That's a weasel word.

Do you want another weasel word in this outline today? On page 4, he talks about "fail-safe mechanisms." Do you know what fail-safe mechanisms are?

Mr Phillips: Is that the guillotine?

Mr Stockwell: No, that's not it. It's reopening

collective agreements. That's fail-safe mechanisms. This is what this party is contemplating: fail-safe mechanisms/reopening contracts, and compensation savings/rollback and wages.

On Monday, we're going to get the legislation by this happy and chortling lot across the floor, and they're going to reopen collective agreements. I'm sure as they reopen them, they may break spontaneously into a round of Solidarity Forever as they strip away their brothers' and sisters' hard-earned collective bargaining gains in the past 20 or 30 years. That is what this government has been reduced to: feeding off itself, eating its young, attacking its own. That's what you've been reduced to.

It's absolutely appalling for the government of this province, a socialist government, an NDP government, to introduce in this Legislature, by its Premier, its leader, the silver spoon socialist, Bob Rae, an act on Monday, a piece of legislation that will introduce opening of all contracts and rollback of wages. If this had been any other government in this province, it would have been peeled off the roof today explaining this, that no government should ever be allowed to reopen collective agreements and roll back wages. Well, Mr Speaker, this—

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Charlton has moved government notice of motion number 6. Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. I declare the motion carried.

Are there any statements? We'll wait for a few minutes.

Interjections.

Order. Any statements?

Hon Mr Buchanan: Mr Speaker, the business of the House will be announced.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1802.

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 9 juin 1993

DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Points soulevés par la population francophone

M. Grandmaître 1291

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 1993 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne les infractions provinciales, projet de loi 47

M. Pouliot 1311

CONTENTS

Wednesday 9 June 1993

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Land Lease Statute Law Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 21, second reading

Mr Wessinger	1271, 1279
Mr Cordiano	1272
Mr Turnbull	1273
Mr Mills	1274
Mr Callahan	1275
Mr Jordan	1276
Mrs Mathysen	1276
Mr McLean	1277
Mr O'Connor	1278
Mr Stockwell	1279

Municipal planning, notice of motion number 13

Mr Callahan	1280, 1289
Mr McLean	1282
Ms Harrington	1283
Mr Mahoney	1284
Mr David Johnson	1285
Mr Sutherland	1286
Mr Bradley	1287
Mr White	1288

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Bridge accident

Mr Bradley	1291
------------	------

Alma Public School

Mr Arnott	1291
-----------	------

Beamsville Strawberry Festival

Mr Hansen	1291
-----------	------

Race relations

Mrs Witmer	1292
------------	------

Ancaster bicentennial

Mr Abel	1292
---------	------

Ontario Film Review Board

Ms Poole	1292
----------	------

Forest industry

Mr Jordan	1293
-----------	------

Stanislava Markovich

Mr Dadamo	1293
-----------	------

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

Social contract

Mr Rae	1293
Mrs McLeod	1295
Mr Harris	1296

Portuguese community

Ms Ziembra	1294
------------	------

ORAL QUESTIONS

Social contract

Mrs McLeod	1297
Mr Rae	1297, 1299
Mr Harris	1299

Youth employment

Mrs McLeod	1298
Mr Cooke	1298

Corporate minimum tax

Mr Kwinter	1301
Mr Laughren	1301

Bridge accident

Mrs Witmer	1302
Mr Mackenzie	1302

Economic development in

Niagara Falls

Ms Harrington	1302
Ms Lankin	1303

Building code

Mr Mahoney	1303
Ms Gigantes	1304

Social assistance

Mr Jackson	1304
Mr Silipo	1304

Waste reduction

Mr Gary Wilson	1305
Mr Wildman	1305

Education legislation

Mr Beer	1306
Mr Cooke	1306

Landfill

Mr Cousens	1306
Mr Wildman	1306

PETITIONS

Health care

Mrs Sullivan	1307
--------------	------

Health education

Mr Murdoch	1307
------------	------

Education financing

Mr Huget	1308
----------	------

Gambling

Mr Poirier	1308
Mr Arnott	1308
Mr Cousens	1308
Mr Sutherland	1309

Automobile insurance

Mr Fletcher	1308
-------------	------

Bruce generating station

Mr Elston	1308, 1309, 1310
-----------	------------------

Public service employees

Mr Beer	1309
Mr Runciman	1309, 1310

International trade

Mrs MacKinnon	1309
---------------	------

Seniors' health services

Mr Murdoch	1309
------------	------

Landfill

Mr Beer	1310
---------	------

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

Standing committee on government

Mrs Marland	1311
-------------	------

Standing committee on regulations and private bills

Mrs MacKinnon	1311
---------------	------

FIRST READINGS

Provincial Offences Statute Law

Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 47

Mr Pouliot	1311, 1315
Mr Mahoney	1312, 1313, 1314
Mr Eves	1312, 1314
Mr Charlton	1312, 1314
Mrs Cunningham	1312
Mr Stockwell	1313, 1315
Mr Wildman	1313
Mr Ruprecht	1313
Mrs Marland	1314
Mrs Sullivan	1315

GOVERNMENT NOTICE OF MOTION

Time allocation, notice of motion number 6

Mr Charlton	1317
Mr Phillips	1318
Mr Stockwell	1324

OTHER BUSINESS

Visitors

The Speaker	1297
-------------	------

Bridge accident

Mr Charlton	1297
-------------	------

Consideration of Bill 4

Mr Beer	1316
---------	------

Continued overleaf

420N
X1
D23
No. 31



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Third Session, 35th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 14 June 1993

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 14 juin 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

Table of contents

Table of contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears on the outside back cover.

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Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Monday 14 June 1993

The House met at 1332.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CARABRAM

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): It gives me great pleasure to rise once again this year to invite all members of the House and the viewing public to a very extraordinary multicultural event that occurs in my riding, the great city of Brampton, once a year. This year it will be on July 9, 10 and 11; that's a Friday, Saturday and Sunday. We have some 19 pavilions, with a new one joining us this year, which is Africa. It should be a very exciting event.

The volunteers who are involved in this are absolutely mega. There are 2,500 volunteers at least. They start working at the end of the Carabram of that year and work right through to make a successful Carabram the following year. In fact, this afternoon in room 351 we will have a few of the people from Carabram in traditional dress with some of the food that will be available in the pavilions.

So I invite you to come out on this July weekend, the 9th, 10th and 11th. It's a very inexpensive event: \$7 if you buy your passport in advance or \$9 if you buy it at the door. We have passports available through my office. I invite you to come to Brampton, and you can travel throughout the 20 exotic pavilions, seeing their culture, their food, savouring the sights, sounds and tastes of all of these communities without once leaving Brampton. In fact, we'll shuttle you around free on buses from one pavilion to the other in order to avoid any possibility of people drinking and driving.

I invite all the members, as I have done in the past, and anyone viewing the telecast to come out for Carabram. It will be a wonderful weekend.

COMMUNITY RECREATION FUNDING

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I would like to advise the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation that two community projects in my riding, the renovation of the Owen Sound family Y and the construction of a new Beaver Valley community arena in Thornbury, require assistance from her.

Both of these are worthwhile endeavours. The Y needs a Jobs Ontario Capital grant to enable it to better serve the 3,000 people from Grey and Bruce who regularly use the multifunctional building each week and who rely on the many programs, classes and service which it offers. Their policy of accessibility ensures that no one is turned away due to a lack of financial resources and it allows over 400 needy children and families to use the facilities at little or no charge.

The Thornbury area has been without an arena for

three years, and the community badly needs a centre for sporting and family activities. Their proposal would create hundreds of jobs for local people and suppliers. This work would be of great benefit to this centre, which is presently suffering some measure of economic depression.

Both these projects have the full and strong support of their communities. Local service groups and church organizations have been instrumental in assisting the projects and raising public funds, but they need the government's assistance as well. Both would be a valuable asset to their areas and both would bring much-needed employment to the region.

I would ask the minister to seriously consider each of these worthwhile ventures and do what she can to turn both dreams into realities.

DADS DAY

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): On June 19, I want to recognize DADs Day. No, I haven't got it mixed up with Father's Day. DADs means Dollars Against Diabetes, and it's a charity drive to benefit all diabetic children across Canada.

On June 19, the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario, the Canadian Building and Construction Trades Department and the Toronto-Central Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council are all taking part in the Dollars Against Diabetes charity drive.

The council is organizing a volunteer group from the membership with representatives from all building trades unions across Canada for a June 19 canvass in shopping malls.

Diabetes now affects over 1.5 million people in Canada, and of these, 150,000 are children. The Juvenile Diabetes Foundation Canada is convinced that, with research, diabetes can be cured.

I would like to proclaim June 19, 1993, as DADs Day across Ontario to help increase awareness for diabetes and to raise as much money as possible for diabetes research. I urge all citizens to give generously on June 19. Let's all join in the fight to stamp out diabetes, for our children's sake alone.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): The province of Quebec has a law in place which effectively bars Ontario construction workers from working in Quebec. This same law also effectively prohibits Ontario-based construction companies from bidding on Quebec jobs.

Ontario, I am proud to say, has no equivalent law and our borders have not been closed to Quebec workers or construction companies. The situation as it exists is patently unfair.

The people of Ottawa-Carleton, by virtue of our proximity to Quebec, are dramatically affected by this discriminatory law. The Minister of Labour tells me that the Quebec construction barrier will be addressed at upcoming interprovincial trade talks, along with hundreds of other interprovincial barriers blocking the free flow of trade between all Canadian provinces.

I am very concerned that the Quebec construction barrier issue will get lost in the shuffle as 10 provincial premiers enter into lengthy, complicated discussions. It has taken years to erect these barriers and it will take years to dismantle them. The problem, of course, is that the people of Ottawa-Carleton can't wait years for the Quebec construction barrier to come down.

I ask that the Premier immediately have some of his representatives enter into talks with their counterparts in Quebec to address only the matter of the Quebec construction barrier. If these talks do not meet with success, or should Quebec refuse to attend, then Ontario should immediately erect the same construction barriers that Quebec has in place. But before taking any unilateral action, our government owes it to both the people of Ottawa-Carleton and the people of Quebec to formally invite Quebec representatives to discuss this specific and very pressing issue.

1340

WAGE PROTECTION

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): Earlier this session, I indicated to the Minister of Labour that it is taking between a year and 18 months for claims filed with the wage protection program to be investigated and settled. At that time, the minister responded by saying, and I quote, "I think at the moment it's between five and six months to finalize a claim."

I would like to take this opportunity to draw the Minister of Labour's attention to yet another example of this program's inefficiency. In December 1991, one of my constituents became unemployed as a result of a company bankruptcy. In the first week of January 1992, he filed a claim. That was 18 months ago. While this person has finally been contacted by the ministry to indicate that the file is being investigated, he has still not been paid after 18 months of waiting.

This is simply appalling. This government has told workers that the wage protection fund would protect them from financial hardship in the event of a sudden layoff or bankruptcy, and it is becoming increasingly apparent that this is an empty promise for workers.

I want to indicate to the Minister of Labour that despite his assurances, it is not taking five to six months for the wage protection program to settle claims. Unfortunately, many workers are waiting a year and a half for their claims to be settled, and that time line is completely unacceptable. I urge the minister to take action now to ensure that the claims are paid promptly

in order that the workers are protected from financial hardship.

COPING IN TOUGH TIMES

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): I am pleased to rise today to tell this House about an organization in my riding called Coping In Tough Times. I'd like to welcome today to the gallery representatives from Coping In Tough Times: Nigel Cowling, Frances Ogunsakin, Helmi Soini, Karen Bass and Esther Inglis.

Coping In Tough Times is a charitable organization founded in 1983 by business people in the community to assist clients with the development of a budget plan. The central focus of Coping In Tough Times is to help teach financially challenged clients how to manage their income effectively while maintaining a decent standard of living.

Coping In Tough Times also educates clients as to the rules and regulations collection agencies must abide by, thereby helping to alleviate a major source of fear and tension faced by many people living in a difficult economic climate.

Over 1,000 clients have been served by Coping In Tough Times since its inception. Trained volunteers work individually with clients to assess their current financial situation and to show them how to make appropriate changes in their financial living.

Coping In Tough Times is funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Metropolitan Toronto, the city of Scarborough and the United Way of Greater Toronto. They currently reside in my riding at 81 Gilder Drive.

Coping In Tough Times volunteers consist of people from a range of financial professions as well as individuals who are concerned in the community. They only have one and a half staff people on a full-time basis, and the rest of the staffing is done by volunteers in the community.

AMALGAMATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

Mr Charles Beer (York North): The residents of London and Middlesex are waiting to hear from the Minister of Education and Training what he plans to do regarding the proposed merger of the London and Middlesex boards of education. There is a great deal of confusion and frustration among the trustees of both boards because the minister has not met with the two chairpersons on this issue but seems more intent on communicating only through the letters page of the London Free Press.

We now learn that late last week in Windsor at a meeting of southwestern directors of education, the minister reportedly said he wasn't going to do anything for a while. The two school boards need the minister to talk directly to the two chairs, Cheryl Miller and Donna McIlmoyle, to lay out exactly what he plans to do.

We know, for example, that the cost of the proposed amalgamation is around \$17 million, but the ministry is only recognizing about \$5 million. For 14 months now, neither board has been able effectively to plan for the future. First, it was the question of the London-Middlesex municipal boundary changes, and then the future of the two boards.

Minister, it is time to set your cards on the table. Will you call the two chairs and resolve this confusion? The waiting game is only leading to greater uncertainty. Minister, please pick up the phone.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): The people of my riding learned today that because of this government's screwed-up priorities, they will be losing the Palgrave GO bus service, which serves communities like Bolton and Palgrave.

This latest announcement lends credence to the theory that as far as public transit is concerned, the Dufferin-Peel region is Ontario's answer to the Bermuda Triangle: an area where GO buses and trains disappear, never to be seen again.

The Palgrave GO bus is the latest victim of Pink-Slip Floyd Laughren and Bob-the-Terminator Rae and their misplaced priorities. It is the latest victim of a government that would rather spend in excess of \$30 million on the Interim Waste Authority to inflict on the people of Bolton a megadump they don't want and don't need than spend a fraction of that to support a GO service they do want and do need.

Again we see a government that is willing to spend millions of dollars on garbage but not a nickel on growth.

The only person who likely welcomed this announcement is the Minister of Environment and Energy, who probably is delighted that there will be fewer buses on the roads in Caledon to get in the way of his garbage trucks.

SHOW BOAT

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): I rise today to add my voice to those who have already spoken out on the lack of sensitivity inherent in the choice of Show Boat as the musical play to open the North York Performing Arts Centre in October. The choice of this production is particularly hurtful to the black community.

In this 1927 musical, blacks are depicted as passive, happy-go-lucky singing caricatures and props to the white characters at the centre of the story. This portrayal does nothing to enhance goodwill and understanding between the diverse multicultural and racial communities.

Some have suggested that Show Boat is history that needs to be told. In fact, Show Boat is historically imprecise and it is no secret that this musical has been

controversial almost since the day it was first staged. Seeing black characters dancing and singing, joyful and even grateful in their subservience, will not allow audiences watching this musical to understand or appreciate the ongoing oppression of blacks in post-slavery America.

To respond to the outcry from the black community by creating a kit that will allow educators to debrief impressionable young audiences about the historical inaccuracies of Show Boat, rather than present something which is factual and which does not stereotype any group to begin with, defies logic.

Within our richly diverse social and cultural fabric, surely a play that celebrates our achievements as a society rather than one that propagates cultural stereotypes and historical inaccuracies could have been found to open the North York Performing Arts Centre.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES SOCIAL CONTRACT

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): In my May budget I described the government's three-part plan for dealing with Ontario's deficit. The plan combined expenditure control, revenue measures and a social contract designed to negotiate public sector payroll savings in return for more job security.

This plan is fair, balanced and necessary. If we do not carry it out, this province will continue to see a massive transfer of its wealth from average Ontarians to bond holders, much of it going outside Canada. That means less money for job creation, for economic renewal and for essential public services such as health and education.

Negotiations on the social contract began on April 5 and reached an impasse on June 3.

The government's last framework offer, presented on June 2, outlined a fair and balanced way of achieving the \$2 billion in social contract savings while protecting jobs and services. It contained many ideas from social contract participants, employee and employer representatives alike. It reflected their shared concern for a humane restructuring of government, for more affordable and efficient government, for greater openness and accountability in government and, above all, for the preservation of our hard-won public services.

1350

That framework has become the foundation for the legislation I will be tabling in the House later today. The bill urges employers—

[Interruption]

Hon Mr Laughren: That framework has become the foundation for the legislation I will be tabling in the House later today. The bill urges employers and bargaining agents to negotiate cost savings at sectoral or local tables in the spirit of the framework and it sets

mandatory criteria for agreements.

First, it significantly enhances job security for employees who negotiate an agreement through a \$300-million job security fund, providing income protection, extended redeployment rights and retraining.

Secondly, it exempts all public sector employees making less than \$30,000 a year, and it guarantees that pay equity will not be affected.

Thirdly, the legislation sets time lines. Transfer payments will be reduced starting July 1. Negotiators have from today to August 1, which is about six weeks, to reach an agreement matching cost savings with the transfer reductions. Employers who negotiate a social contract agreement at the sectoral level will have their cost-saving targets reduced.

Fourthly, if negotiations fail, the bill will ensure that \$2 billion in social contract savings is achieved in a fair and balanced way.

It is our hope that the savings can be negotiated. However, if the parties fail to agree, we have a responsibility to protect the jobs of public sector workers and the services they provide.

The bill does not mandate wage reductions or rollbacks but it says that, failing an agreement by August 1 between the parties, there will be no wage increases for employees until after March 31, 1996. This applies to any increase scheduled for June 14 of this year onwards. If that is not enough, the cost savings will have to come from unpaid leaves or temporary layoffs.

The legislation also says that, failing a negotiated agreement, employers must comply with a sectoral redeployment plan to enhance their employees' job security.

Social contract agreements must be filed with my office in order to guarantee that compliance is in the spirit of the social contract and applies fairly and equitably to all employees, and the legislation sets up a mechanism to deal with objections to agreements or disputes.

In conclusion, I want to say categorically that our government finds any prospect of overriding collective agreements painful and difficult, but our pain and our difficulty are nothing compared to what the alternative would mean for this province. This is about jobs and the people who need them. It is about services and the people who depend on them. It is about the social contract that we have with each other that recognizes that sometimes it is necessary to give up something for the common good. Our whole budget plan is based on the idea that we all contribute to the social and economic health of this province.

We urge the parties to reach a negotiated resolution. It is our belief that employer and employee representatives will be able to put aside their differences and

remember their shared commitment to quality public services for the people of this province. It is our intention to facilitate these negotiations as much as possible, and we will have materials and teams available to support the parties with their work. This week ministries will be sending employers and bargaining agents details about their cost-saving targets as well as copies of a guide to the legislation.

This government values and respects the work of all who serve their communities as public employees. On behalf of the government, I would like to wish the parties the very best in this endeavour, and on behalf of all of us who live in this province, I thank them for their dedication and commitment to our common good.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LEGISLATION

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): Last October, my colleague the Chair of Management Board informed the House of the government's intention to reform the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act, otherwise known as CECBA. Based on positive results from consultations with a number of government employees, bargaining agents and staff associations dating back to 1991, my colleague informed the House that he had asked the Ministry of Labour, under whose jurisdiction CECBA falls, to continue this reform process with a view to eventually developing legislation.

Both the public service unions and the government have long desired reform of this important statute, which governs labour relations for almost 100,000 working men and women in the Ontario public service and its affiliated agencies. Compared with the Ontario Labour Relations Act and labour laws in many other provinces, CECBA is a restrictive and outdated piece of labour legislation. It has not been significantly reformed in more than 20 years. It excludes many workers from the rights and benefits of collective bargaining, denies all government workers the right to strike, restricts and narrows the scope of bargaining and relies excessively on costly and time-consuming arbitration.

Furthermore, it has hampered attempts by both the government and bargaining agents to develop the better working relationships that are necessary to improve both the quality of work and the services government provides.

I am pleased to tell the House that after further consultation with all interested parties, I am introducing legislation later today to modernize CECBA and bring it into line with similar laws in other provinces.

These changes will also give both the government as employer and the public sector unions the same rights and responsibilities now available to their counterparts in the broader public sector and private sector.

These reforms are both fair and balanced and will ensure that labour and management take full responsibility for collective bargaining outcomes and the many

challenges affecting their workplace during a time of rapid change.

Some of the more important proposals I will introduce later today include:

—Broadening, as much as possible, access to collective bargaining for excluded classifications and allowing many of these workers the freedom to choose their own bargaining agents. The reforms will not affect employees' seniority.

—Opening up the collective bargaining process to include all workplace issues, including classifications.

—Lessening the reliance on binding arbitration by requiring the mutual consent of both parties beforehand.

—Subject to further consultation, removing crown agencies from CECBA's jurisdiction and placing them under the Labour Relations Act. It bears stating at this time that existing bargaining unit rights and agents will be preserved in all cases under this legislation.

—A provision that will allow for new bargaining unit structures.

Lastly, mindful that the people of Ontario depend on a variety of critical and essential public services 365 days a year, the public sector will have the right to strike, but it will be contingent on both parties' prior agreement on essential service designations. The public can be assured that essential public services will always be protected in the event of a strike or lockout.

Today's reforms will give working men and women in the public sector rights and opportunities they have requested for many years.

They will allow the government to conduct its labour relations in a system that is fairer, less cumbersome and less expensive.

They will encourage greater maturity and responsibility in public sector collective bargaining and place the responsibility for resolution of workplace disputes largely on the two parties and not on arbitrators.

They are in the best tradition of a government committed to progress for working men and women.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Let me begin by saying how frustrating it is that after all of this time and all of this anguish, all that we have today is a brief statement from the Treasurer and not in fact the piece of legislation in front of us so that we can respond to the details of that legislation.

This is a clear sign that the chaos continues, that this government is still desperately responding literally on a day-to-day basis to try and find a way out of this mess that it has created.

I find it ironic that it is the Minister of Finance who's presenting this legislation. I am sure that this is not a happy day in his political career. I am sure he is torn by what he has just had to announce. He knows that he has

to find \$2 billion in cost reductions to meet his budget targets. We all agree that this Finance minister and this government must get their budget in under a \$10-billion deficit. It is also very clear that the government has to show firmly how it is going to achieve that budget.

But the Finance minister knows that the whole social contract mess has been a disaster from the beginning. Last week, finally, the Premier himself said: "Broad, comprehensive solutions will not work. I've listened and I understand that they will not work." He has opened the door for local negotiations, without enough time to let them take place and with much less likelihood of success in the atmosphere of confrontation that has been created.

1400

Local negotiations were always the way to go and we have said that from the very beginning, but because this Premier has chased his dream of some sort of social contract, this government is now forced yet again into legislative action which is likely to be unworkable if it ever has to be implemented. The Premier said comprehensive solutions won't work, and yet this government intends to present the same comprehensive solution that nobody found acceptable and it is still not workable.

All of the questions that were raised during the social contract circus are still on the table. The bill, according to the Finance minister's statement, says that the \$2 billion will be achieved in a fair and balanced way, and we still say, what does that mean? How do we begin to understand what is fair and equitable in all of this chaos? How can this approach work successfully across all of the sectors and all of the contracts that are involved?

It appears from the brief discussion we've had with Treasury officials it has finally been recognized that additional, unpaid leave for people like teachers and nurses and policemen and firemen is simply not going to work. I ask the Finance minister, why do you not simply start calling a wage rollback a wage rollback, because in many sectors that is exactly what you are proposing?

I ask you how a job security fund is likely going to work. This sounds to me like the whole deeming issue which has so plagued the Workers' Compensation Board, only this time writ large across the entire broader public sector.

Who is going to determine who is qualified to hold a particular job? Who is going to determine whether one hospital is obligated to hire the laid-off worker from another hospital? How are you, by the way, going to make up the 20% incentive funds which you're now talking about giving to any local group that reaches an alternative solution?

At the end of this, I ask you, how much of this cost reduction is real and ongoing and how much of it is just

going to be deferred until some miracle budget year in the future? This legislation is a mess and it will not even achieve the 5% reduction that you need.

All of the questions are still on the table. They are questions that demand answers. There are no answers in the statement that you have presented today. There are unlikely to be any answers in this legislation. All there is is a failure to acknowledge how completely this government has mismanaged this situation from day one. We can only hope that through the common sense of people who live and work with the reality of this world, we'll somehow find a better way out of this mess.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LEGISLATION

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): I want to respond to the Minister of Labour, who many people are now calling the Minister of Unemployment. It's ironic that we see this legislation at this time, when the government's energies and this Legislature's energies should be on job creation and unemployment and getting on with improving the economic climate in the province. I'm going to have a lot to say about this legislation, because many of its provisions I have great concern with.

However, what I think is particularly important in this ill-timed but very deliberate piece of legislation today is that it speaks loudly and clearly to the mismanagement of the NDP government in their own labour relations with their own employees. It is disgraceful, sir, the way you have treated your very own employees and this is not going to be enough. This is not going to be enough to restore good labour relations in Ontario.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I first of all want to respond to the Minister of Labour who stood in his place today, I guess, with this bill—this is the Bill 40 of the private sector, now to be extended to the public sector—and I do wish to respond to the Treasurer.

Let me just say this very clearly, so that all understand, union leaders, union employees, public sector, private sector: Just as Bill 40 can and will be scrapped, this legislation as well can and will be scrapped, so don't get too comfortable with it. If you think this sop while the social contract gutting and ripping out of agreements is being brought in by the Treasurer has a longer shelf-life than September 6, 1995, which is as long as you can hang on, you've got another think coming. I want that to be very clear.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): Let me deal now with the statement by the Treasurer, I guess in the absence of the Premier, who's hobnobbing in Washington, as I understand it.

You know, when I campaigned along with your leader and with the Liberals in the last election; I said

you can't carry on with this Liberal-socialism, NDP-style coalition spending, and everybody said I was wrong. We found out today that I was absolutely right. We told you this three years ago when you took office too. We told you two years ago when we said you're going to have to have a 2% increase solution instead of this 15% that you went off of and got everything all out of control.

We told you then when you finally came to a social contract—you said, "My gosh, what are we going to do? We've got to do something"—there was only one way to have meaningful dialogue: Tell people you were serious, tell us the amount, \$2 billion; second, set a firm deadline; third, give us the "what ifs." It has taken until today to meet those three conditions whereby you can have negotiations.

Now, how far offtrack are you? I liken what you have been doing, just in this social contract talks process, to a 20-storey building on fire. You closed all the first-floor exits and then you closed the second-floor exits and then the third-floor exits. Now you've closed right up to the 19th- and 20th-floor exits and you've left Ontarians, you've left workers, you've left families, you've left them with either the 19th-floor exit to jump off or the 20th-floor exit to jump off this burning building that you and the Liberals created and you put on fire. One, do nothing—that's unacceptable; that's the 20th-floor option, in my view. The 19th floor, which is unacceptable, is this gutting and rolling back chaos of a piece of legislation you wish to bring forward.

I'm serving notice today as well on this piece of legislation that I and my caucus colleagues will be putting forward amendments to this bill. We'll be seeking the support of the Liberal Party, we'll be seeking the support of all of the NDP members who believe that retroactive rollbacks, gutting the negotiation process, creating the chaos out there is not the right way to go.

We'll be asking for those amendments to this legislation as we have outlined in our release this morning, that anything we didn't see in there we would be insisting on. We'll be looking for the three-year hiring freeze effective today, to start that attrition time clock going. We'll be asking that implementation of this be for a three-year period, on the anniversary date that contracts come up; on the anniversary date that contracts come up for three years. So we're not retroactively gutting, we're not taking away, we're doing it in a logical, organized way.

We'll be putting forward proposals that on the wage component alone can save up to \$3 billion over three years instead of \$2 billion in one day and then nothing for the rest of the three years, that will logically provide a long-term solution, not a short-term knee-jerk, something that's building up onuses that are going to have to be paid for when the three years are over. This "days

off" will come back to haunt us all. This is not a permanent saving. These can be moved forward so they all come due the day this bill expires. We'll be offering positive alternatives for a long-term, permanent solution to properly downsize the size and the cost of government.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Once again, it's a little bit difficult to know how to focus questions when we have not in fact seen the legislation which is clearly going to be an unprecedented piece of legislation. My question will be, of course, to the Minister of Finance and the Deputy Premier who has presented in his statement some indication of the direction that this government intends to take.

It is quite clear from the statement that the Finance minister has made that the legislation is going to be unprecedented in its scope. We believe it is a direct result of the chaos that this government has continued to create, that certainly there are going to be in this legislation some very broad implications for some 950,000 public sector workers across the province as well as the 9,000 collective agreements under which they work.

1410

It is a fact that this piece of legislation could change the face of collective bargaining in this province, literally for ever. We also recognize that the time which the government has now allowed for some alternatives to its legislative hammer to be found is very short. Nevertheless, I ask the Treasurer, as they plan to bring forward this piece of legislation, for some assurance that there can be some kind of limited public hearing, that there will be some way in which we can have hearings that will give us and people in this public of Ontario, as well as people directly affected by the legislation, some understanding of the full implications of what they propose.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): I'm somewhat puzzled by part of the preamble of the leader of the official opposition, in which she complained about not having seen the legislation yet. When I look at the standing orders of this place, we have to go through the routine proceedings before we get into introduction of bills. I don't know whether she's operating in some other kind of legislative framework than I am, but that's the tradition in this House. Simply, all we're trying to do is provide an opening statement that tells you the broad direction of the legislation. Then, when the legislation's introduced this afternoon, it'll be available for everyone to see, at the end of routine proceedings.

When it comes to dealing with the legislation in this assembly, I would assume that the three House leaders

will be sitting down and talking with one another, as is normally the case when it comes to talking about expediting the passage of legislation in this assembly. I wasn't clear in what the leader of the official opposition said as to whether she supports this legislation or doesn't. I'd appreciate clarification on that.

Mrs McLeod: I can understand if this Minister of Finance feels that I am somewhat confused in the preamble to my questions, because they have led to nothing but confusion in what they have presented day after day. As we read media reports about the way in which their position is changing, and as we try and decipher what was in that statement today, there are just too many questions. There are so many questions that are unresolved. They've been unresolved in two months of intense negotiations. They are legitimate questions; they deserve answers.

What I am asking of the Finance minister is to tell us how we are going to get the answers that we need so that we and the public can determine what kind of responsible or irresponsible action this government is taking.

Hon Mr Laughren: Attempting to preserve essential services and at the same time contain the cost of delivering those services is hardly an irresponsible act on the part of this government. That's exactly what we're trying to do. Unless the leader of the official opposition has been living under a bridge for the last six months, she would know what the basic framework is for this legislation. It's based on the social contract. There's been ample discussion all across the province on the social contract.

When she sees the legislation this afternoon, and, I'm sure, engages in debate on second reading of the bill, there'll be ample opportunity for her to put forth suggestions for improvements of the bill. We look forward to hearing her very positive contributions.

Mrs McLeod: I have one very specific question, then, before the legislation is presented. It would appear to us, in the few moments that we've had to get some understanding of intent, that this legislation is not even at the end of the day going to lead to the \$2 billion, the 5% reduction in the broader public sector compensation package that this Finance minister needs to meet his budget targets. I ask the Finance minister quite simply, is this real cost reduction on an ongoing basis, or are you not simply deferring a great many of these costs until some miracle budget year about three years down the road?

Hon Mr Laughren: No, absolutely not. It would be shortsighted indeed to achieve savings in the short run or defer savings, because that just puts off for tomorrow a problem we have to deal with today. I can tell you that the people in this province are tired of governments that put off the problems to another day. We're dealing with our problems today as we face them, which you

failed to do when you were in government. I wanted to reassure the leader of the official opposition that the \$2 billion in savings that we targeted at the beginning of this entire process will indeed be achieved this fiscal year.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question.

Mrs McLeod: Talking about delay, it's somewhat ironic to hear this Finance minister talk about delay today when we have a Finance minister who last November understood that his budget was in trouble and is part of a government that did not begin to deal with the problem until about eight weeks ago, and we have had eight totally wasted weeks in the meantime.

It is now four months into the budget year. It will be at least two to three months before any of the solutions that the government has proposed can be implemented. That will mean we are halfway through the budget year, and that means that all of the savings, the \$2 billion that this Finance minister must achieve, will have to be achieved to meet the Finance minister's goal in the current budget year.

I ask the Finance minister in all seriousness, how can you begin to meet that target of the full \$2 billion in what is now six months of the year? What studies have you begun to do to show what the impact will be on wages, on layoffs, of trying to meet that full cost reduction figure in what is six months of the year?

Hon Mr Laughren: First of all, the fiscal year to which we are referring is the province's fiscal year. Let's be clear about that. The fiscal savings of \$2 billion that must be achieved are in the province's fiscal year, which does not have six months remaining, but indeed has until the end of March 1994. I don't think that it's fair, or accurate even, to say that there's only six months left in our fiscal year. There isn't. Count it. It's from now right through until the end of March 1994.

We believe that if the partners out there, the employees and the employers in the public sector, sit down in the spirit of negotiation and goodwill in order to protect services, we will indeed be able to achieve the \$2 billion in savings this year. As a matter of fact, we are committed to achieving those \$2 billion in savings in this fiscal year.

Mrs McLeod: There are just so many questions. There are tremendous challenges for the people who are now being asked to undertake local negotiations, if they are to attempt to begin to even meet those targets in the balance of this fiscal year.

The leader of the third party has offered some solutions. He suggested that, after all, it can be relatively easily done through attrition, that all you need is a hiring freeze. The Treasurer, the Finance minister, has understood that that doesn't work if you have to replace a policeman or an ambulance driver, and that's why

you've built some exemptions into this legislation to cover that sector.

The leader of the third party has suggested that you simply have a wage freeze, that this will be a large part of the solution. The Finance minister clearly understands that many contracts have already been reached which provide wage freezes for at least this year and maybe for the next two years as well. So those sectors get no reductions by simply freezing their wages. Will those sectors get some reduced target?

I ask the Finance minister, when will each of those bargaining partners, each of those in the different public sectors, understand clearly what the financial targets are, what the 20% incentive will mean? Will the 20% be reduced from the target? Exactly what are the financial targets and when will they know?

Hon Mr Laughren: It's a fair question. We will be sending out this week the specific reduction targets for everyone out there in the public sector, employers and bargaining agents alike, and all will receive the unreduced target number as well as the reduced target number if they're able to reach agreements, either at a sectoral level or at the local level. Our partners out there will get the information to which you appropriately refer before the end of this week. As a matter of fact, we hope to send it out tomorrow, I believe, so there should be no problem with them having all of those targets this week.

1420

Mrs McLeod: I still obviously have some very real concerns about broad-brush comprehensive solutions which the Premier himself acknowledged last week could not possibly work, and I'm sure our questions will continue to raise those issues of the unworkability of these broad-brush solutions that are being proposed this afternoon.

Let me raise one specific question that we've raised in the past, and that has to do with exemptions. You will recall that the Premier, perhaps in a somewhat too casual moment in Hamilton, indicated that Hamilton municipal workers would be exempt from any social contract provisions because they had already done their share.

There are many municipalities, many hospitals, many school boards where, through the process of collective bargaining, people feel as though they have taken responsible and realistic action, where they feel as though they have begun to do their share.

Let me simply ask the Finance minister, as he proposes to bring in this legislation, will there be any exemptions? Will there in fact be any room for special cases to be made to reflect the reality of real life situations?

Hon Mr Laughren: I do appreciate the fact that a lot of municipalities and social agencies have worked

very hard in the last year to make their delivery of their services more efficient and more cost-effective. At the same time, I believe that if we were to try and build a long list, or even a short list, of exemptions into the legislation, we would be opening a door that would see the savings of \$2 billion very quickly begin to unravel. So there will not be exemptions in the legislation.

However, there will be in the legislation an understanding that if, for example, a local bargaining unit comes to an agreement with its employer, that agreement must be approved and must meet the broader framework or principles involved in the social contract so that as much as possible services and jobs are protected at the local level, and we must not forget that what has driven this entire exercise has been savings in compensation at the public sector level.

The Speaker: New question, the leader of the third party.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): In the absence of the Premier, my question is to the Minister of Finance. First of all, let me say that on the day when this legislation is being brought in, I suppose I should feel that the world is a safer place because all living Rhodes Scholars are posing for photo ops in Washington. However, I want to tell you how disappointed I am that the Premier is not here in the House today with this legislation.

To the Minister of Finance: For the past period of time since we started talking the social contract, and I got a sense that you were actually beginning to get serious about cutting back on all the Liberal spending, you know that I repeatedly asked you and the Premier to consider as part of the solution, part of the fourth option, the idea of an immediate hiring freeze on the public sector.

This obviously is not the entire solution—there are many other things, as we put forward, probably 18 or 20 proposals—but this one alone would over a three-year period permanently reduce the size of the public service, gaining potential savings of up to \$6 billion over three years. It would do so without undue hardship to families. It would do so, if you are upsizing at the same time, without job loss. It would do so at the same time without gutting contracts and agreements and slashing away at things that are already in place.

I would ask you, Minister, why is there no mention in any of your statements or announcements today or in the legislation of a hiring freeze as part of the solution?

Hon Mr Laughren: First of all, in view of the fact that the leader of the third party talked about the Premier's absence in Washington, I should tell him that he is in Washington meeting with United States trade representative Mickey Kantor, and surely any Conservative would know why he should be down there talking about trade problems between this province and the United States.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): It's too bad the federal Tories aren't carrying out their responsibilities with regard to trade.

The Speaker: Order. Minister?

Hon Mr Laughren: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As a matter of fact, I wouldn't be surprised at all to see the Prime Minister designate heading down to Ottawa—

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Washington.

Hon Mr Laughren: —to try and correct some of the problems caused by her predecessor, but we'll see in the next few months whether or not that happens.

The leader of the third party asks about why there's not a hiring freeze. The trouble with a hiring freeze is that it's unbelievably crude and simplistic. If, for example, there is somebody delivering an essential service who retires because of an early retirement incentive or retires just through the normal attrition factors, if that person retires and is a correctional officer, a fireman, a policeman, whatever, then surely to goodness the leader of the third party understands that a hiring freeze simply doesn't work if you are interested in preserving essential services all across the province, and that's one of the major components of a social contract, to preserve essential services.

Mr Harris: I think you'll find that we have seen, in the statements today and in the bill to be introduced in the House, the classical definition of "crude" coming from the NDP, coming from the Minister of Finance, coming from the Minister of Labour, when you talk about solutions.

You would know, Treasurer, that you and the Premier and your cabinet waited far too long before taking action to get savings this year. Some transfer partners are now six months into their fiscal year. You also know that you're not going to be able to meet the compensation cuts without either mass layoffs or complete chaos in the delivery of services, and you're going to need additional savings to meet your budget target.

We would like you to meet or exceed your budget deficit target, so let me ask you this: Why is it that there is no discussion to allow the dedicated men and women in the public service and in the extended public service to encourage them to be able to bring forward their ideas—whistle-blowing protection, a way to put an end to what they call year-end burn-off—some of the ideas that we have put forward to cut back on government spending, setting priorities and identifying the programs no longer productive or necessary?

Why is it that we have nothing and no discussions going on in these areas that could substantially reduce the burden on the deficit and on the taxpayer, because we all know your \$2 billion coming out in wages is achievable over a fiscal year, over a year period, but not in one year when it's half over.

Hon Mr Laughren: First of all, the leader of the third party is making the same mistake the leader of the official opposition is. No social partner out there—school boards, municipalities, social agencies—none of them are more than two and a half months into our fiscal year, and it's our fiscal year which is driving the \$2 billion in savings. I hope we can put that to rest: We're not asking people out there to achieve savings in six months; we're saying that in the balance of our fiscal year we wish to see those savings achieved.

The other matters that the leader of the third party raises I think are most appropriate. We're prepared to sit down at any point and talk about other ways to achieve savings and to cut out waste. As a matter of fact, you may recall that on the social contract table, that was one of the things that was being discussed, but when those talks ended on June 2, of course, we entered a new phase. But there's absolutely nothing to prevent us from sitting down, and we want to, with employees to talk about ways to achieve savings, and as has been said many times in this House, the whistle-blowing legislation to which he refers will indeed become the law of the land in this province.

Mr Harris: I would like to ask the Treasurer if the Minister of Labour, who had no statement to make today, at the cabinet table or in this process attempted to speak up for those things he did in opposition.

When we had a restraint program that, I might add, was not retroactive, gutted no contract, but dealt on the anniversary, the Minister of Labour at that time said he wanted to know what the government was going to do to square that proposal with the preamble of the Labour Relations Act, which was to protect free bargaining?

The Minister of Labour at that time wanted to know why the bill before us removed from several hundred thousand public service workers in Ontario basic and fundamental rights to free collective bargaining. At that time, the Minister of Labour wanted to know how the government could reconcile what it was doing with the arbitrary cancellation of contracts that were in there, and fourthly, the Minister of Labour wanted to know, how do they justify tearing up legal contracts?

Now, that was a plan that was not retroactive gutting, as your plan is. That was a plan starting on the anniversary date of contracts. There was no statement by the Minister of Labour today telling us how he was going to protect the rights of 940,000 workers. I thought there would have been.

Did he, at the cabinet table, speak up and answer these questions that he wanted answered when he was the opposition? Now that he has the power to do so, did he say anything on their behalf?

Hon Mr Laughren: If I understand the leader of the third party correctly, he's asking me to discuss what a

cabinet colleague said at the cabinet table. Perhaps he did that when he sat at the cabinet table. I'd be very surprised if he did that, however.

All I would say to the leader of the third party is that I've sat at the cabinet table with the Minister of Labour now for two and a half years, and I have never, ever been in a debate on any issue on which the Minister of Labour did not make a positive contribution.

1430

ASSISTED HOUSING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): My question is to the Minister of Housing. I want to return to the question of whether the government should help needy people by building and subsidizing housing or by expanding the already existing shelter allowance program.

Your own figures, Madam Minister, show that the average shelter allowance is \$354 a month, while the average non-profit subsidy is \$854 a month. Obviously, we can help far more people with a shelter allowance than with non-profit housing. We can also give them more choice as to where to live, and if we stop building non-profit housing and redirect the money to shelter allowances, we could eliminate the long waiting list for assisted housing.

Minister, whenever I raise this option, you refuse to consider it, yet I am now hearing from the NDP's traditional constituency that this is what they want. Why are you ignoring their advice to cut non-profit housing and expand shelter allowances?

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): I have never ignored the contributions from the member for Mississauga South, and I have never avoided the discussion of whether we should be engaged in building new non-profit housing. I'm always pleased to speak about it.

We have considered the matter very thoroughly and, like other governments before us, we have determined that the creation of new non-profit shelter is a very important way of addressing the overall housing needs of Ontarians.

I have pointed out before to this member that the province of Ontario spent over \$2.5 billion in shelter allowances last year through the social assistance program, and it spent an additional \$80 million through the rental subsidy program administered by the Ministry of Housing. All those payments go to the private sector market, or almost all of them, and she is asking us to expand that program without increasing the supply of affordable rental shelter. We think both have to happen.

Mrs Marland: The minister may question who is giving me this advice to expand shelter allowances and cut non-profit housing, so let me just tell her. This advice is from disabled persons who want to receive a direct subsidy that empowers them to control their own

lives. This advice is from members of unions and the NDP who cannot get through to this government. This advice is from public housing tenants who are fed up with deplorable living conditions, and this advice is also from non-profit tenants who have witnessed how poorly their housing projects are managed.

Minister, I ask you again: Will you consider their sound advice if you won't even listen to me?

Hon Ms Gigantes: I accept sound advice from all quarters. In fact, when there is advice, I welcome it.

This government's commitment is that it has allocated funding for over 30,000 units of non-profit housing, which in itself generates over 45,000 jobs, full-year-equivalent jobs, since we came to government, and we will be allocating another 20,000 units of non-profit housing over the next three years.

We believe the supply of affordable housing has to increase. We believe it's a good investment for this province to have affordable housing that will stay affordable, and with all the difficulties there have been with programs, we're working very hard to improve the quality of non-profit housing in this province.

Mrs Marland: I guess the answer is that they're doing this because it creates jobs. While the minister says it's affordable, she should really talk to the Peel Non-Profit Housing Corp and see what it is currently saying. They are the first housing corporation in this country.

I want to ask the minister about some information her deputy gave to the standing committee on public accounts. I asked Mr Burns where families that receive shelter allowances live. His answer leaves 539,000 families unaccounted for. I also requested an update on non-profit housing subsidies. Your ministry doesn't even know how much non-profit housing costs. This is incredible, when you plan to build another 46,000 units. Even your figures for the number of units under subsidy are wrong. They don't include stock that was built prior to 1986. It's amazing. The public accounts committee had to wait 10 months for your deputy's answers and then they were riddled with errors or incomplete. Minister, just when will you be able to give us the full and correct answers to our questions?

Hon Ms Gigantes: It's very simple to provide an overall average cost, and that has been provided to the member and the public accounts committee. As of April, the average annual subsidy was \$11,300, including the rent-geared-to-income portion and the capital cost. But that does not answer the full extent of the questions which the committee and the auditor have been interested in. Those will take time to provide, because it means going back through the accounts of each individual development since 1986. We can certainly provide the member with accounts before 1986.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): My question is to the Minister of Finance. That's a new, wonderful title. Last week I met with members of the community, youth employment workers and various youth groups at St Christopher House. The theme of the evening's discussion was "Beyond summer employment: Long-term strategies for youth employment." The appeal by these groups is that funding for youth employment and training programs be increased to 20%, responding to the high level of youth unemployment in Ontario.

Government spending, as you know, has increased by 19% since you have taken office. The Futures youth program has fallen behind. In spite of the additional funding to your Jobs Ontario, the \$102-million Futures program remains the largest initiative to help young people find jobs. The Ministry of Labour has received a 39% increase since the NDP has taken office. The Futures program has only increased by 7% over three years, less than the increase in inflation. Minister, help me respond to the youth who have felt that you have abandoned them to no jobs and no hope.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I know the member has a legitimate concern and a real concern, and he quite appropriately raises youth unemployment in Ontario. It is serious. That's why this year we'll be spending overall about \$180 million on youth employment programs across all different ministries and why for the summer, when it's particularly acute, we've put an additional \$25 million into youth employment, and used Jobs Ontario Youth, for example, to top up various programs.

I think it's not appropriate to say that we've abandoned the unemployed youth in the province this year. We've certainly done what we can. I don't disagree with the member for Scarborough North that there's much more to be done, but I think he appreciates very well, as a fiscal conservative, that there's only so much we can do in terms of putting money into any particular program this year.

Mr Curling: I've listened carefully to the minister, but youth unemployment has increased from 12% to over 19% over the last few years. This government has decided to put important youth programs such as Futures on hold—that's how it feels about it—yet the Ministry of Citizenship has been allocated a 57% increase since you have taken office. Minister, how do you explain that 57% increase for the Ministry of Citizenship in comparison to the below-inflation funding, as I indicated before, for the Futures program? Again I say, give our most disadvantaged group a chance, a hope in our future. Why do youth programs seem to be the last priority in your government?

Hon Mr Laughren: It's really unfair to imply—or even say directly—that youth employment programs are the last priority of this government. That really is not fair.

For Jobs Ontario Youth, we're putting in \$14 million this year for programs in Toronto, Windsor, Ottawa and Hamilton; for the summer Experience programs, \$7.5 million plus a top-up of \$2.2 million from Jobs Ontario Youth; for the Environmental Youth Corps, \$9.7 million plus an additional \$2.2 million from Jobs Ontario Youth; for the northern Ontario training opportunities program, \$3.5 million plus another \$2.6 top-up from Jobs Ontario Youth.

1440

The member referred to the Futures program. We are spending, if you add the Jobs Ontario Youth to the Futures program, over \$100 million this year on the Futures program. So for the member for Scarborough North to imply that we've got no priority for youth employment programs in this province, he is absolutely wrong. We are doing everything we can.

Of course we can't guarantee full employment for all the unemployed youth in this province. If the member for Scarborough North is saying that his party is prepared to come out and take a position on guaranteed employment for youth in this province, I'd like to hear him and his leader stand in their place and say that.

TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I'd like to ask the Treasurer a question, based upon the statements he's made today on the Ottawa board and the Metropolitan Toronto School Board. As I understood from some of the interaction, he plans to have the Metropolitan Toronto board and the Ottawa board write him, on behalf of their taxpayers, cheques for up to \$90 million, I guess, and some \$75 million in Ottawa.

I wonder if the Treasurer can confirm that he'll be calling on them as part of this process, as the Treasurer gives them no money for their grants for education; whether he's serious that he expects the taxpayers in Metropolitan Toronto and Ottawa to write out a cheque to Floyd Laughren and Bob Rae, and the Minister of Housing for her 5% increase in her wage package. Is that what he really wants and expects us to believe?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): As the Minister of Education and Training has been meeting with those boards, I'll refer the question to him.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I'd just indicate to the leader of the third party that I have discussed with the representatives from the boards, and I get the very clear sense that they understand that they need to be cooperative and want to be part of this whole process because they're as concerned about maintaining Ontario's financial health as anybody else in this province is.

They also understand that it would be terribly unfair if all the other boards of education in the province participated in this—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Want to bet

they're going to write you a cheque?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member for Etobicoke West is out of order.

Hon Mr Cooke: —other boards where their wealth is much weaker, in other parts of the province, that it would be terribly unfair if Metro and Ottawa did not participate. They have indicated that they want to cooperate, they want to discuss with our government how this can best be done, and we intend to listen to them and work with them to do it in a cooperative way.

Mr Harris: I have met with representatives of the Metropolitan Toronto School Board, and over their dead bodies they're going to write you a cheque. That's what they told me. I assume the taxpayers in Ottawa are not going to write you a cheque to feed the Minister of Housing the 5% increases in pay that she wants to give either.

Let me ask you this: The Treasurer indicated in part of the discussion that there were other ways, that there's money going to school boards other than legislative grants, intimating that if you don't get the cheque you're going to hold something else back. Can you tell us what other ways you have to extract money from the Metropolitan Toronto School Board and the Ottawa school board?

Hon Mr Cooke: I know it is always the approach of the leader of the third party to say, "Either do it our way or tell us what the 'what else' is going to be." It's the approach of this government that we want to work with people, want to try to find solutions that everybody can live with, and I believe that the school boards in Ottawa and Metropolitan Toronto want to find those common solutions as well. They don't buy the kind of confrontation that the Conservative Party always wants to start up.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): My question is to the Minister of Environment and Energy. I have here a story from the St Catharines Standard. In it, environmental reporter Doug Draper says that your ministry is urging the province's Environmental Assessment Board to approve Ontario Waste Management Corp's bid to build a huge hazardous waste disposal plant in my riding. Mr Draper got his information from a report submitted to the Environmental Assessment Board by your ministry.

In this 259-page document, your ministry says that it sees only advantages to approval of the OWMC undertaking and that the risks associated with the undertaking are far less than the risk to the people and the environment of Ontario if the plant is not built.

I am sure you're aware that I am very much opposed to the Ontario Waste Management Corp's bid to build this toxic monstrosity in Lincoln. I'd like to remind the House that thousands are against this too. Would the

minister please tell me why his staff believe that the OWMC approach to Ontario's toxic waste problem is deemed acceptable when many others believe it is not?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I am fully aware of the member's views on this matter, as well as the many views of his constituents, and I appreciate him bringing it before the House.

The report to which he refers and the newspaper referred to is a very lengthy one—as he's indicated, 259 pages—and I think there are a few comments taken out of context perhaps. But having said that, I'm sure the member would agree with me that there are other ways of dealing with waste in this province in terms of the government's commitment to reducing and reusing and recycling rather than simply disposing of waste.

I also hope that the member would appreciate that, as minister, I should not prejudge the joint panel's ruling, and I won't do that. I will just say that when the board comes forward with this ruling, if it approves such a facility, then the government will decide what next steps to take on this project.

Mr Hansen: Can the minister advise this House and my constituency whether or not it can still afford to build OWMC's \$250-million white elephant, given the province's debt crisis? This plant was originally to be built for \$60 million; over \$120 million has already been spent on the environmental assessment.

Hon Mr Wildman: I know that the rules of the House preclude members from being pejorative or controversial in their questions. I would say in response to my colleague's comments and question that, should the joint board approve the facility, the government will then determine its next steps. Some of the issues that will be taken into account are the estimated costs and the fiscal situation. I'm sure my colleague the Minister of Finance and my other cabinet colleagues will be very interested in the costs that might be involved in such a proposal.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I had intended to direct my question to the Minister of Health. In her absence, I will address it to the Deputy Premier.

This week, some 400 residents and interns begin their final examinations in general and family practice, in paediatrics and in psychiatry. A few weeks ago the Minister of Health said that those doctors should work for a quarter of their negotiated fee schedule. Then she said they should work for three quarters of their fee schedule. Then she said that she was going to accept, full-blown, the report of the Evans committee, but she wasn't certain if her cabinet would approve of the recommendations of that committee.

In less than two weeks those doctors will be ready to practise, but they will still have no firm indication, despite our requests and demands in this House, of

where they can practise or how they will be paid.

I'm asking the Minister of Health today to tell the House what her final decision is with respect to how our new doctors will be treated, how they will be paid and where they can practise.

1450

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): My answer to the member is that this is not a decision that is made unilaterally by the government or by the Minister of Health. It is a decision that is negotiated with the Ontario Medical Association. As the member has said, certainly our first proposal was a deep discounting of new entrants to the profession. As a result of concerns that had been raised in the work of the provincial coordinating committee on post-graduate medical education, a report was prepared involving a number of different bodies from the academic health scientist centres, with the Ontario Medical Association and the interns' association present.

The proposals of that committee have also been put before the Ontario Medical Association, and I'm pleased to be able to tell the House that since the conclusion of the negotiations with respect to the social contract, there have been a couple of meetings with the OMA, and both the OMA and the ministry are determined to conclude this particular portion of the negotiations as quickly as possible.

Mrs Sullivan: There is no time left. In less than two weeks, 400 highly trained specialists, general practitioners and family practitioners will be ready to work. They don't know where they can work; they don't know how they will be paid. When can we expect any kind of a reasonable response from this minister, who is Health minister, who sets the policy, who has announced on four or five different occasions different policies? Will she tell those young doctors and the communities in which they were expected to practise when and how they can practise and how they will be paid? We need to know now, today.

Hon Mrs Grier: Let me point out to the member that regardless of whatever, I think, is negotiated with the OMA, there are positions today for many of those new physicians in the underserved areas of this province. She should perhaps consult with her own members from northern Ontario. I can certainly tell you that my members from northern Ontario have received many, many calls, as have hospitals, as have community health departments—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Halton Centre, come to order.

Hon Mrs Grier: —as have areas in the north. More doctors, finally.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Dufferin-Peel.

GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a question for the Minister of Environment and Energy, the minister responsible for the environment. We're all concerned with the release of toxic chemicals into the Great Lakes system and we all know that this is a serious problem which demands the attention of all governments, specifically the province of Ontario and the federal government.

This past weekend at a conference here in Toronto, a representative from Pollution Probe, Paul Muldoon, pointed to recent studies which indicate that children whose mothers ate fish from the Great Lakes have serious cognitive problems and other physical problems.

The Canada-Ontario agreement, as you know, which is a federal-provincial pact which outlines how each level of government will implement the Great Lakes water quality agreement, has now become fully expired; it became fully expired about two months ago. This agreement outlined how Ontario and the federal government planned to clean up the Great Lakes.

This question was asked in the federal House—a question as to what is going on, essentially. It was asked of the Minister of the Environment, and the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Mr Lee Clark, answered that question by saying, "I would like to assure the House that the government of Canada is ready to return to the negotiating table with the government of Ontario as soon as the latter is prepared to do so." In other words, Mr Minister, the ball is in your court. Would you tell this House, would you tell us, when you are going back to the table to renegotiate this agreement?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): This is really something, to have this kind of comment from a Conservative member. The question is not whether they're prepared to come back to the table; it's whether they're going to bring any money with them.

Mr Tilson: All of a sudden there's a problem. This Canada-Ontario agreement was negotiated by a Progressive Conservative government over 20 years ago and it was renegotiated year after year after year. It only was when your government came to power that the whole thing collapsed. Your government is doing absolutely nothing with this problem; absolutely nothing. It was criticized last year by the Provincial Auditor. MISA will require \$6 billion to get the entire waste and sewage infrastructure back on course. The United States—the various eight states—collects data on the volume of toxic chemicals released into the Great Lakes and there's no similar plan in the province of Ontario, no process that's under way. When is your government going to take action on this serious problem?

Hon Mr Wildman: I recently wrote to the Honourable Jean Charest, suggesting that perhaps we could

return to the table as soon as possible and suggesting that it would make sense, if the federal government wants to negotiate international agreements with the United States of America, that the federal government be prepared to share 50-50 the cost of cleaning up the Great Lakes when in fact the province has been spending tremendous amounts of money and the federal government has been touting what we're doing without putting a dime on the table.

MUNICIPAL WASTE DISPOSAL

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The city of St Catharines has expressed some concern about Bill 7, the waste management legislation. I know the minister and some of the other members in the House from the Niagara area are aware that the region of Niagara is one of the few in the province that do not have the power over their own waste management.

While Bill 7 would allow for the regional government to take over waste management from the lower-tier municipalities, the engineering department of the city of St Catharines in particular has expressed some concerns over this change in jurisdiction. Specifically, the city feels there would be a delay in dealing with waste issues in the St Catharines area if waste management powers were to switch to the region. As you may know, St Catharines has adopted the club approach and has joined with three other Niagara municipalities to find a new landfill site. The city has said any change in jurisdiction will slow this progress and process.

In addition, as the agent of this so-called garbage club, the city of St Catharines has entered into some long-term contracts to provide various waste management services and is worried that a change in jurisdiction will impact these contracts.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Ms Haeck: Mr Minister, how will Bill 7 affect these contracts in the city's search for a new site?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): The bill is permissive. I don't think that should pose a problem to the city.

Ms Haeck: The other concern expressed by the city is that the regional approach to waste management will be more costly for it since, as a larger municipality, it will be expected to subsidize waste management activities in the smaller Niagara municipalities. They also worry there will be job losses in the engineering departments of the various Niagara municipalities because of this streamlined, centralized approach.

Mr Minister, can you alleviate the concerns that the city has with respect to the expense of the regional approach to waste management? Can you advise me if there will be any provisions for employment for those staff members affected by this change in jurisdiction?

Hon Mr Philip: Yes, there is.

1500

BRIDGE ACCIDENT

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Those of us, including you, Mr Speaker, who have sat in this House for years can well imagine the wording of a question about an industrial accident had it been the present Minister of Labour when he was in opposition. I well recall some of the inflammatory language which was used on those occasions, but I won't use that tack today.

I simply want to ask the minister, knowing that the people of St Catharines and the Niagara region and no doubt particularly the families of the people who died in this unfortunate accident and the workers who were directly involved in this accident, I think we would like to have from the minister a report in the House—it's a few days after, now; it's not the exact same day—on how such an accident could happen, particularly in light of the minister's stated strong commitment over the years to occupational health and safety and his desire to see his ministry be able to respond in the best possible way to circumstances which might point to an industrial accident. Can he tell us how this accident could possibly happen and what action he has taken, and his ministry, to ensure that we don't have a repeat of such a tragic event?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): We expect the forensic testing of the equipment in the next couple of days. We have a team onsite. We had inspected the site and the new platform a number of times over the last couple of years. So there is not the hard information yet. I made it clear to this House last week that as soon as I had the information it would be passed on to the members in the House.

Mr Bradley: There has been announced by the treasury board of the cabinet an across-the-board cut in the last couple of years. I believe it's been an across-the-board cut in the amount of money allocated and the staff that is allocated to each ministry. Governments usually try to determine what their specific priorities are going to be before invoking those particular cuts.

Could the minister tell us if he feels that today, in June 1993, he has sufficient staff and resources still available to him to be able to carry out the necessary inspections and investigations to not eliminate—because that's totally impossible, to be fair to the minister and to everyone—not to totally eliminate, though that would be our goal, but to reduce significantly the risk of accidents of this kind from happening.

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I think it's one of the issues that would be at the top of my list. We did increase the number of inspectors and we're putting in place a number of programs that deal in the health and safety field. We have seen some substantial improvements in the last six months in the health and safety record in the province. We will meet the requirements we have for

cutbacks, but we will not do them in areas that are essential or front-line service, at least to the best of our ability, and at the moment I am satisfied that we can deal with it.

We had some 17 fatalities across the province last year, of which five were as a result of falls. During the first six months of this year, we've had three fatalities in the construction industry reported, which is considerably better. If it holds that way, and with the number of improvements that are going on in the training programs, I think we're on the right road.

VETERINARIAN TECHNOLOGY COURSE

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): To the Minister of Agriculture and Food, Centralia College of Agricultural Technology was closed and will be non-operational at this time next year. Can the minister explain why the veterinarian technology course is being moved to Ridgetown when indeed the new facilities have been built in Kemptville and are ready for occupancy if indeed that course were moved there. Can you explain why it has gone to Ridgetown?

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): We're exploring the possibility, yes, of the vet tech program moving from Centralia to Ridgetown. We're also, as part of that package, looking at the equine program, which was at New Liskeard, which would move to Kemptville. These are, however, sort of temporary, early explorations that we're making to see how we can make best use of the facilities that are at Kemptville and Ridgetown.

Mr Villeneuve: Yes, Mr Minister, the facilities are there, and I gather that the principal of the Ridgetown College of Agricultural Technology has stated that an addition has to be planned. Do you have an estimate of the cost of this addition, and indeed the cost of moving the staff to Ridgetown as opposed to moving into a ready-made establishment at the Kemptville College of Agricultural Technology?

Hon Mr Buchanan: Yes. It's a little bit more complicated than that. At Kemptville we have facilities that will house the equine program which was at New Liskeard, that can be looked after at Kemptville. When the member suggests that there are facilities at Kemptville, that's true, but the facilities that are there are being used now for other things. They were built a number of years ago and were never used in fact for a vet tech program.

When he says there will have to be some expenditure at Ridgetown to accommodate the vet tech program, he is correct. However, it is also true that the facilities at Centralia were in bad need of upgrading and capital improvement as well, and that for a number of years there have been proposals to do something with the facilities at Centralia. They have been on the books for many years. There were plans to do some upgrades at Centralia as well.

There will have to be some capital upgrades at Ridgeway, the member is correct, but we are trying to balance the programs and make sure that they're available in Ridgeway and Kemptville. We can't put everything in Kemptville. I know the member would like to have that, but we do have to spread the different programs around the colleges that we have.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question, the member for Essex-Kent.

VISITOR

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'd just like to know whether you have taken the opportunity to introduce Sid Ryan, the president of CUPE, who is in the public gallery.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): That is not a point of order but certainly of interest to a lot of people.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): My question is to the Minister of Health. The words "expenditure control" and the changes these words imply are on everyone's mind. A group in my riding are particularly concerned about government expenditure cuts on our doctors.

These are men and women who have spent many years in school training themselves in order that they may serve Ontarians with the best medical help and knowledge available. However, they have read the proposals put forward by your ministry to limit the number of practising doctors in Ontario and they have several related concerns.

Specifically, can you tell the doctors in Essex-Kent what studies and statistics were used by your ministry to determine which areas of the province are underserved by general practitioners?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm glad to expand on that. First of all, let me say to the member, as I did to the member for Halton Centre, that the discussions with respect to physicians' incomes and any discounting thereto are under negotiation with the Ontario Medical Association. But I think both the Ontario Medical Association and the ministry and indeed ministries across the country agree that we have to find a better way to manage our professional resources if we are in fact to maintain the quality of our health care system as well as constrain its expenditures.

The underserved area program is a program which quite frankly has not produced the right physicians in the right place at the right time, and since 1991, in response to the member's specific question, that has been a program where communities, self-designated and in conjunction with their local government, the boards of health, the district health councils, identified the physicians that they needed.

I hope that as a result of our discussions with the Ontario Medical Association we can come to a much more precise definition and finally resolve this long-

standing issue.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The time for oral questions has expired.

Interjection.

The Speaker: That was a very lengthy reply. The minister, I think, knew that you were waiting.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Mr Speaker, I would like to ask for unanimous consent for the member to give his supplementary, because I interrupted him.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for the member for Essex-Kent to ask a brief supplementary? Agreed.

1510

Mr Hayes: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and the other members of the House. It will be very brief.

Minister, how often will this list of underserved areas be updated, and what flexibility will be built into it to allow for retirement, sickness, educational leaves, leaves of absence etc? What I'd like to know is really what flexibility would there be and how often will the underserved areas be updated?

Hon Mrs Grier: The updating of the areas that are designated as underserved is continual, but I'm very pleased that as a result of the work of this provincial coordinating committee on post-graduate medical education, one of the proposals that we are now discussing with the OMA is in fact a complete revamping of the program so that we develop some formal regional mechanisms for medical human resources so that we can not only respond to the different needs in different areas, but do some long-term planning to ensure that we have the appropriate resources in the appropriate regions.

PETITIONS

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Cobourg, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty;

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles, free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I have signed the petition.

ONTARIO FILM REVIEW BOARD

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the Ontario Film Review Board, at its May 6, 1993, policy committee meeting, decided to loosen the guidelines for films/videos for Ontario; and

"Whereas the loosening will result in permitting some very gross and indecent acts in films/videos; and

"Whereas these acts include bondage, ejaculation on the face and insertion of foreign objects; and

"Whereas the aforementioned acts are not in any way part of the true human sexual activity but rather belong in textbooks for case studies of deviants; and

"Whereas these activities not only violate community standards but parts of the Canadian Criminal Code,

"We, the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the Ontario Legislature

"(a) to cancel the new policy resolution of the Ontario Film Review Board, May 6, 1993;

"(b) to ask the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, the Honourable Marilyn Churley, to review the criteria for appointments of members to the Ontario Film Review Board, and

"(c) to ensure that prospective appointees reflect traditional and moral values of the people of Ontario."

This petition contains hundreds of names of concerned individuals, and I am happy to lend my support by signing this petition today.

GAMBLING

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I have a petition signed by nine of my constituents to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr John Sola (Mississauga East): I have a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

It is signed by 10 members of Mississauga, and I will add my signature to it.

SENIORS' HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I have a petition here that was given to me by a Mrs Wannamaker of the senior citizens' club in Trenton, Ontario, and it reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas many of the senior citizens of Ontario are widows or low-income, therefore many of them cannot afford to pay for drugs prescribed by their doctors;

"Therefore we, the undersigned members of the Trenton Senior Citizens Club, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reconsider the changes to the Ontario drug benefits program regarding price changes and cost-sharing etc, which will be a hardship to many senior citizens of Ontario, low-income families and also those on welfare."

I present this to the Legislature and I have signed my signature to it.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): I have a petition signed by 500 members of the community in and around Winchester and Chesterville. It's addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Parliament of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ministry of Education proposes to substantially modify the provincial schools for the deaf and learning-disabled by either downsizing, closing parts of or restructuring the schools, resulting in significant hardship for students, families, employees and the local community, for the purpose of saving money; and

"Whereas the Sir James Whitney Parents' Association believe that quality education delivered today within the current provincial schools for the deaf and learning-disabled provides the lowest total-cost option available while allowing deaf students to wholly develop within their own culture and to receive the best education possible;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Firstly, to maintain the current provincial schools for the deaf and learning-disabled until an acceptable model from all interested parties has been developed; and

"Secondly, empower local boards of trustees, as set out in model 5, to manage their own budgets within ministry guidelines and funding."

This is the first of many such petitions. I have signed it and fully endorse it.

LANDFILL

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I have a petition here that has been sent to me by the salespeople at ReMax Realty in Keswick in support of a letter to the office from York Region Real Estate Board, the political affairs committee, and they would like to reiterate

their concerns. The petition is to eliminate the sites of York region and redirect tax dollars into research for waste management as alternatives that do not turn land into garbage. I affix my signature to this.

CLOSURE OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it says:

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food has decided to close Centralia College of Agricultural Technology and the veterinary services lab, diagnostic laboratory and the college on May 1, 1994,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to reverse its decision to close Centralia College of Agricultural Technology and the veterinary services lab located at Centralia campus."

That's signed by 2,640 petitioners and I have also signed the petition.

GAMBLING

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I've got a petition here like many of the petitions sent to the Legislative Assembly around the casino issue. I'll just read the bottom.

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video terminals in the province of Ontario."

I affix my signature to this.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I have another petition that has been submitted to me by a Diane Cyr and many of the other concerned parents, teachers and pupils at the Sir James Whitney School in Belleville, Ontario, and it reads:

"To the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Education proposes to substantially modify the provincial schools for the deaf and learning-disabled by either downsizing, closing parts of or restructuring the schools, resulting in significant hardship for students, families, employees and the local community, for the purpose of saving money; and

"Whereas the Sir James Whitney Parents' Association believe that quality education delivered today within the current provincial schools for the deaf and learning-disabled provides the lowest total-cost option available while allowing deaf students to wholly develop within their own culture and to receive the best education possible,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"(1) Maintain the current provincial schools for the deaf and learning-disabled until an acceptable model from all interested parties has been developed; and

"(2) Empower local boards of trustees, as set out in

model 5, to manage their own budgets within ministry guidelines and funding."

I support this petition and have affixed my signature to it.

1520

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I have a petition that was submitted to me by members of the OPSEU in my area, and it reads:

"To the honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of the Quinte area, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it, and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of the public services."

Again, I have affixed my signature to this petition.

GAMBLING

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I have another petition that was submitted to me by the Bridge Street United Church in the city of Belleville, Ontario. The petition was gathered by Mrs Morgan, the administrative secretary, on behalf of the Bridge Street United Church. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, *Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome*, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislat-

ive Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

Mr O'Neil: I have another petition—

[Interruption]

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Sergeant?

Would you please reset the clock, and with the indulgence of the member for Quinte, I failed to see the member for Kingston and The Islands had a petition to present.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I have a petition signed by some 25 people in my riding.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, *Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome*, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

Mr O'Neil: I have a similar petition that has been forwarded to me by the members of the North Trenton United Church congregation in Trenton, Ontario, and it reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SOCIAL CONTRACT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONTRAT SOCIAL

On motion by Mr Laughren, the following bill was introduced for first reading:

Bill 48, An Act to encourage negotiated settlements in the public sector to preserve jobs and services while managing reductions in expenditures and to provide for certain matters related to the Government's expenditure reduction program / Loi visant à favoriser la négociation d'accords dans le secteur public de façon à protéger les emplois et les services tout en réduisant les dépenses et traitant de certaines questions relatives au programme de réduction des dépenses du gouvernement.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Mr Laughren moves that leave be given to introduce a bill entitled An Act to encourage negotiated settlements in the public sector to preserve jobs and services while managing reductions in expenditures and to provide for certain matters related to the Government's expenditure reduction program and that it now be read the first time.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the "ayes" have it.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am tabling with you today legislation called the Social Contract Act. This legislation will enable the government to complete the third element of its fiscal plan: the \$2 billion in social contract savings.

Legislation will create a job security fund for employees and will exempt public sector employees earning less than \$30,000 a year. This bill will reduce transfer payments by \$2 billion effective July 1. If employers and bargaining agents fail to reach an agreement by August 1, the legislation mandates that there will be no wage increases for employees until after March 31, 1996. If that is not enough to offset the transfer reductions, unpaid leaves or temporary layoffs are permitted.

It is our belief that these negotiations will reach a successful conclusion. We will give the parties as much

support in this work as we can and we wish them our very best in their endeavours.

CITY OF GLOUCESTER ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Morin, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr18, An Act respecting the City of Gloucester.
1530

HUMANE SOCIETY
OF OTTAWA-CARLETON ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Chiarelli, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr82, An Act respecting the Humane Society of Ottawa-Carleton.

CROWN EMPLOYEES
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LA NÉGOCIATION COLLECTIVE
DES EMPLOYÉS DE LA COURONNE

On motion by Mr Mackenzie, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 49, An Act respecting the Collective Bargaining of Employees of the Crown and other matters Relating to Collective Bargaining / Loi concernant la négociation collective des employés de la Couronne et d'autres questions relatives à la négociation collective.

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): The form of the bill is designed to achieve four key objectives: to establish a balanced labour relations system that will better serve the needs of both the government as employer and its employees; to establish a system of free and equitable collective bargaining; to foster mature, responsible collective bargaining relationships; and to promote consistency in the labour laws that govern Ontario workplaces.

EXPENDITURE CONTROL PLAN
STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE
LE PLAN DE CONTRÔLE DES DÉPENSES

On motion by Mrs Grier, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 50, An Act to implement the government's Expenditure Control Plan and, in that connection, to Amend the Health Insurance Act and the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act / Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre le Plan de contrôle des dépenses du gouvernement et modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi sur l'arbitrage des conflits de travail dans les hôpitaux.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): This legislation enables the implementation of the Ministry of Health's expenditure control plan. It is entirely consistent with the expenditure control and reform agenda of the ministry. The guiding policy principles have been to preserve medicare by ensuring its affordability, accessibility and the quality of care and payment only for medically necessary services.

COUNTY OF SIMCOE ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE COMTÉ DE SIMCOE

On motion by Mr Philip, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 51, An Act respecting the Restructuring of the County of Simcoe / Loi concernant la restructuration du comté de Simcoe.

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): I'm proud to introduce the County of Simcoe Act, an act that will streamline municipal government in that county and make it more cost-efficient and cost-effective. I'm introducing the legislation because it was what locally elected people have requested. County councillors and others have worked on the study and come to an agreement. They've also brought their request to the provincial government and their local MPPs to help it be implemented.

In introducing the legislation, I would like to recognize the hard work done by the MPPs for the area, MPPs from both the opposition and the government, and I look forward to their continued cooperation in getting the bill through second reading and getting it into committee where the people of Simcoe can have yet another opportunity for input.

TOWNSHIP OF ATIKOKAN ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Wood, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr38, An Act respecting the Township of Atikokan.

OPPOSITION DAY

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT
JEUNESSE EN CHÔMAGE

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Mr Speaker, we have a resolution to present to the House today and to be subject to debate which we feel is of the utmost importance.

Mrs McLeod moved opposition day motion number 3:

Whereas Ontario's young people are facing a job crisis; and

Whereas the unemployment rate for young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years of age is currently at 20.4%, which is an increase over very high rates we have seen over the last two years; and

Whereas the unemployment rate for youth has increased by 9 percentage points since the NDP government took office; and

Whereas more than 190,000 young people are currently out of work in the province of Ontario; and

Whereas the ongoing levels of high unemployment point to a chronic and deep-rooted economic problem; and

Whereas the NDP government's commitment to summer jobs programs has no strategic plan to help

youth deal with the unemployment crisis; and

Whereas the NDP government's response to this crisis has been ad hoc and has not dealt effectively with the obstacles young people are facing; and

Whereas the NDP government has failed to show leadership in the management of its own summer employment opportunities for youth; and

Whereas the NDP government's Jobs Ontario Youth does not address the needs of young people of varied employment needs across the entire province of Ontario;

This House resolves that urgent action is required and that the following initiatives be included in an action plan to help our young people get the education, training and jobs they deserve, and that these initiatives be funded by re-allocating funds from failed NDP training programs such as the Jobs Ontario Training fund:

—Funding for the summer employment for youth should be increased to \$60 million in recognition of the extraordinary crisis facing students this summer.

—Funding for the successful Futures program should be increased by 20% to reach approximately 34,000 young people, an additional 6,000.

—Co-operative education programs at all levels of education should be expanded.

—A scholarship system that encourages businesses to contribute to the further education of youth should be established.

—A pre-university program should be established to help young people improve their grades and gain increased access to universities.

—A database system providing youth with information about training, education and job opportunities across Ontario should be established.

Mrs McLeod: I welcome the opportunity to speak to our resolution, one which we consider to be of the utmost importance and one which comes forward at a very critical time for the young people of this province, but I do not welcome the reality that this matter of youth unemployment has reached truly crisis proportions and that the proportions of the problem have become greater literally year by year for the last three years.

Day after day, we have raised this matter and raised our concerns in this Legislature. We want this issue to be on the front burner for this government at this very critical time, and we demand that this government give the young people of this province the attention they so desperately need, that the government not leave them stranded while it continues to be preoccupied with trying to clean up the messes it has kept creating.

Our young people cannot wait. They cannot be left off to the side, becoming more and more disillusioned, more frustrated and more discouraged. Our young people simply cannot be allowed to become defeated

and hopeless. We recognize that this is a complex and multidimensional issue, and my colleagues over the course of this debate will speak on a range of the matters that concern us.

1540

I want to just begin to describe the problem, the stark reality that the young people of the province of Ontario are facing in May 1993. One hundred and ninety thousand youth are unemployed, that is, in the age group of 18 to 24. Obviously, the unemployment concerns extend well beyond that age, but that's the age we use in which to try and describe the statistical dimensions of the problem. I reference May because that is the last month for which we have statistics.

One hundred and ninety thousand young people in that age group, then, were unemployed in the month of May. One hundred and ninety thousand young people represents 20.4% of the population in that age group, but there are areas in which the unemployment levels for that age group are even higher. In the Peterborough region, youth unemployment is 26.4%; in northeastern Ontario, it's 28.5%. It's clear that the statistical figures will be somewhat different from region to region and that in fact they will change from month to month, but the human cost of that kind of unemployment is truly immeasurable and it must be changed.

It is a complex issue. We have continuing concern for the high numbers of young people who continue to leave school before they've completed their high school education. These young people will simply not have the skills that will be needed for success in a world in which higher and higher levels of skills are going to be needed. There will be very few jobs for unskilled young people in the future.

But today, in June 1993, the reality is that there are very few jobs for anyone. In fact, we are seeing a new phenomenon in this province, a phenomenon which we never, ever expected to see, and that's the phenomenon of highly trained college and university graduates who cannot find work. There are far too many young people who are going to leave their graduation ceremonies this month and walk right into unemployment lines, and this is a truly tragic waste of both talent and training.

The difficult economic realities we face in this province have resulted in a shortage of career-track positions as downsizing in both the public and the private sectors slashes the number of entry-level jobs. Our young graduates are competing with so many laid-off older workers who have extensive job experience. They are competing for jobs that simply do not exist, and, where there is a vacancy, they are competing with people who have so much more experience on their résumé that they have very little hope of success in that competition. I would say to you, no wonder the young people of this province are feeling discouraged.

It's quite clear that the only way to address the real

problems of youth unemployment is to address the overall issue of the job shortages in this province, yet this government continues to pursue policies that drive away businesses with its high taxes and its anti-business legislation. This NDP government has destroyed the economic vitality of this province, it has mismanaged its economy, and it has left very little for our youth. The only real hope for a better future seems to me to lie with a new government, a government that will create the kind of conditions that will encourage new investment and reinvestment, so that we will see jobs maintained and new jobs created.

In the meantime, it is clearly essential to ensure that we are providing our young people with the education and the training they will need to fill the jobs that can be created in the future. But training itself can become a very discouraging process these days, because the people providing the training are constantly challenged by the question, "Training for what?" Unless we have jobs, our training programs cannot hope to be focused and effective.

Our young people, whom we are encouraging to stay in school, encouraging to get the training they need, are simply not sure that the efforts they make to obtain education and training are going to be worth the effort, because they see far too many people who have an education who want to work—their friends, their relatives, these same people who have done all they needed to do to get the skills they needed, who want to find those jobs and simply can't find a job in the field they're trained for.

I have to admire the youth of this province, because in spite of the discouraging realities that they know they face today, they continue to apply for spaces in our colleges and our universities. They continue to believe that if they secure the education and training they need, they will be able to contribute to the future of this province and to lead productive and fulfilling lives. I think they recognize that continuing their education and their training is a better and, I would suggest, a much less costly alternative to sitting on unemployment lines.

Yet even here the young people of this province are frustrated as the spaces in our colleges and universities for next fall are reduced, as college applicants receive conditional offers of acceptance while the NDP government wastes more and more time in pursuit of the impossible: 118,000 applied for 70,000 openings in our college programs. I ask, what will happen to the 48,000 who do not get in? Where are they going to go? It is absolutely essential that some real effort be made, and made now, to give the young people of this province some encouragement and some greater support.

We have offered this government some very constructive suggestions for steps that could be taken immediately. I draw the government's attention, in all seriousness, to steps which we believe would be a way of

reaching out to our young people and giving them some hope and some support.

Our proposals would support 6,000 more young people in the Futures program so that more of our chronically unemployed youth would get that little bit of a head start they need. Our proposals would expand cooperative education opportunities to give young people some of that job experience they need so that they can compete successfully with older workers who have more job experience on their résumés.

Our proposals would see the setting up of a scholarship program in conjunction with business so we can both help young people feel encouraged to go on with their education and provide some financial support to be able to do that. We would encourage the setting up of pre-university upgrading programs so that young people can get the background they need in order to be successful in obtaining spaces in post-secondary programs. We would establish one-stop-shopping networks to provide young people with information about the jobs and training that may exist.

I would say to the government, because we are all concerned about budgetary restraints and where the dollars are going to come from, that these proposals are costed out to the last dollar, that they can in fact be carried out at very little cost and that the dollars can readily be found by redirecting the allocations for existing programs that are not working.

These programs can be put in place for very little cost, if only this government were prepared to make the young people of this province a real priority.

Lastly, we have urged this government, day after day, to create more summer employment for young people. We were dismayed to find that the entire \$14 million that the government had put in place for its new program, its only new program for young people, is targeted to job creation in only four communities. We agreed with the addition of \$14 million and supported the government's initiative in providing this job program for our young people when it was first presented a year ago, but we cannot support the targeting of this program to only four communities.

The minister has said, in response to our questions, that these four communities were chosen because of their high unemployment. We agree that there is high unemployment among our young people in Toronto and Ottawa and Hamilton and Windsor. The young people of those communities need jobs, but so do the young people in Peterborough and Belleville and St Catharines and Sudbury, where youth unemployment is even higher.

1550

There is simply no excuse for shutting the young people in every other community of this province out. There is no excuse either in this government pretending

that existing government programs for young people have not been cut. If you cut the budget from your existing programs for youth, such as the summer Experience program, you are providing less support, and it doesn't matter how you shuffle the number of weeks that are worked to be able to hire as many students as you hired last year so the numbers look good. When you cut the budget for young people, you've cut the support that young people need, and that is unacceptable.

To add to the crisis, at the same time that the government was cutting back on its programs for youth because young people are not a priority, all of the businesses that traditionally have hired young people in the private sector are reeling from the impact of the disastrous budget that this government brought in. The hospitality industry, the tourism industry, the construction industry, the retail sector, all those areas where normally the young people of this province can look for summer employment are all being forced to cut back on their permanent staff and they are simply not hiring young people this summer, so the crisis and the concern continue to build.

If this government does not act now to help our young people, I am afraid that we are faced with the prospect of a truly lost generation, a generation of young people who, in their frustrations and their anxiety, become angry and alienated. We must not abandon our youth to hopelessness.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I do want to say a few words and assure everybody that there's not a dissenting voice in my entire caucus for what I'm about to say. I'm quite confident of that. They've all given me their enthusiastic support to proceed on their—

[Applause]

Mr Harris: You can hear that right as I rise to speak.

I want to say that I will support this resolution that has been put forward today. I want to make a few comments on the specifics and some of the details. I want to indicate that my support is based upon raising and getting debate and awareness and allowing some discussion, which the government hasn't done, on a very, very important issue, that of our youth today, how discouraged they are, not just youth unemployment but the lack of opportunities and of hope that our young people feel today in the province of Ontario. I think this is something that, as we look at the impact of the recession, the impact of this restructuring that's going on, the impact of eight years of absolutely disastrous government policies in this province of Ontario, if it's affecting anybody perhaps more than others, it concerns me the most—and it's been negative on most of us—I really feel for our young people.

I had a chat last week with a teacher in North Bay,

Mr Burnett, who came in to see me, and I thought, "Well, here's a teacher;"—Moe Burnett's his name, one of the outstanding teachers in North Bay—"he wants to see me. He's probably concerned about social contract talks, about what's happening with the government," and I was fully anticipating this would have been the discussion.

He came, and he really and truly—and he's a friend of mine as well—I'd never seen him, this man who has worked hard all his life, has a marvellous wife and family, children, two of whom have graduated from university—I've never seen him so sad. I thought, and he did not, but I thought he was going to break down in my office. He certainly talked emotionally about his experiences with students in high school, his own family, the experiences they were relaying to him of their friends in university and those who had graduated and saw no hope for them in this province of Ontario.

I thought of this great province, this province of opportunity for so many people for so many years, not just for Ontarians. We were such a province of prosperity and opportunity we were able to share that with people not only from all across Canada, indeed that, but all around the world.

Many of you have heard me speak of that tourism slogan that we used to have: "Ontario, Yours to Discover." I was in the tourism business and to me it meant a lot more than just tourism. It was to discover the lifestyle, the education system, the environment, the clean air and clean water, the quality of life, but it means nothing if you don't have a job. It means nothing if you can't see yourself being able to contribute to and fit into this society and be able to earn money, pay your way and advance and get ahead, see where you could raise a family and have a life and an opportunity for their children, for your children to move ahead.

Young people are committing suicide in record numbers. In North Bay, the suicide rate among young people is three times the national average. We're dealing with a community that I believe is one of the finest communities in Canada. We are finding they've lost hope. They don't see a future for them. They look at this massive debt, by the way, and they understand what it means. It means that generations before them have spent their money, and now they're going to ask them to pay it back. They see it growing federally, they see it growing provincially and they see governments seemingly incapable of dealing with it. They understand what deficits mean.

At the same time, there are no jobs for them. They see their friends who are older who have graduated; they see siblings who are now looking beyond Ontario, many beyond Canada.

My friend Mr Burnett had indicated that he was there on behalf of the young people who had lost hope. Many are giving them advice now—instead of facing a year of

rejection, another 500 rejections of a job, perhaps to leave their families and go to other countries, to other lands, as so many did when Ontario was yours to discover and they came from Europe, South America, Asia, India, so many countries—we're now saying to our young people, or they're feeling, that they've got to leave this country; to that extent.

I think it's a great tragedy that we have not been talking about this more in this Legislature. I think it's a great tragedy that the government hasn't, in these mad-dash, knee-jerk social contract talks, looked at the impacts of what it means to families and to people, and particularly what it means to young people.

I see the Minister of Housing here who defended 5% increases, "Get 'em through the wire, spend that year-end money and take everything, give it all out, Ontario Housing Corp, before the legislation comes in and we bring down the hammer and we tell them we're going to freeze wages," so they can now be frozen in 5% higher than anybody else—the absolute hypocrisy of that kind of action. Young people see this. They see the future in Ontario diminishing. These kinds of actions I just don't understand. So we're supportive of the principle of advancing this issue forward, of talking about what we can do to restore hope for young people.

Dealing with the deficit, quite frankly, which the Premier, the Treasurer and the NDP are committed to do, is a step in the right direction, let me acknowledge that; something the Liberals have not faced up to, even though they're the ones who have frittered away most of the money and led us into this terrible situation. When I look at the number of programs they brought in—almost a passion that they had to try and redistribute 100% of the money that came in, forgetting that you had to leave some money in the marketplace with families, with individuals, so they could benefit from any increased level of economic activity. They took that and said, "We can spend it smarter than you," and of course they couldn't, and we deteriorated.

1600

Again, the Liberals forgot as well you have to leave money in the hands of the private sector to reinvest in new technologies, in new skills training that the private sector can do in training its own workers. There are two ways to do it, you see: Leave them enough money before you tax it all away so that they can invest in the new machinery, the new technology, the new ideas and invest in training their employees; or you can tax all the money away from them and then the government provide it, and of course the government—Progressive Conservative, Liberal, NDP—rarely is able to target that money or that training as well as the private sector industry and businesses can themselves.

The Liberals were worse than most in that regard, yet they were committed to taxing it all, taking it all: "We can spend it smarter than anybody else." That's how we

got into this mess, and more of the same won't get us out of this mess. The NDP tried for two years to give us more of the same. Now I again acknowledge they've recognized that the eight-year spending binge of coalition, NDP-Liberal, and then themselves had come to an end. It was time to pay the piper. We are supportive of that in recognizing the deficit as part of it.

Let's deal with the specifics of the resolution. My colleagues, I know, want to talk about some of them. The leader of the Liberal Party said, "We've costed all this out to the last penny, the last dollar," but she didn't tell us what it was. What's in here? She says it should be increased to \$60 million. From what? She says, "Funding for the successful Futures program should be increased by 20%." That's costed. "Co-op education programs expanded." She didn't give us a dollar figure, by how much, how. They think this stuff comes out of the thin air; you can have all this and the spending. She said it was costed to the dollar and didn't tell us one dollar of what the costing was. That's typical liberalism.

"A scholarship system that encourages business to contribute to the further education of youth." I like that. I think that's a good idea. It's the first good one they've had in eight years that I've seen them operate, in government and in opposition. I think it's a good one. But there's no costing, no dollar figure. They say, "We'll take the money out of—we'll reallocate." I think you have some failed programs they want to reallocate from, but how much will be reallocated? Why don't they tell us that? They don't want to be accountable. They didn't in government; they don't in opposition.

"A pre-university program should be established to help young people improve their grades and gain increased access to universities." What does this mean, this "pre-university program"? Is that whereby you acknowledge the school system has failed our young people, and here's another new program? Why don't you reform the education system? Why don't you deal with the disastrous move, particularly started by the Liberals, towards mediocrity, "They're all the same," all those policies of social liberalism, leftism, whatever you call it, "All kids are the same."

Nonsense. They're not all the same. Some are brighter than others; some learn faster than others; some are good in math; some are good in literature; some are good in athletics; some have different skills; some, at certain points in time in their lives, learn faster than others; some are motivated at different times. You try to make them all the same and you're still carrying on those Liberal policies to try and do that. I don't understand.

Now they want a new program to correct this. Why don't you just correct the problem in the beginning, or is this a way to artificially get the grades up? Is the goal to get grades up or teach our young people the skills and the knowledge they need? What do these grades up

mean? Our grades mean nothing in Ontario. Nobody knows today when you get 90% whether that's 90% relative to other schools, to other students, to other provinces, to other countries; 90% means nothing. So I think that one's one of the silly ideas they've advanced; again, no costing to it.

Let's deal with our education system. We tabled a paper, *New Directions*, Volume Two. I'm sorry I didn't bring it to hold up. I usually take every opportunity to publicize it, because it's a document of some 70 or 80 pages with concrete suggestions how we can make our education system more accountable and better and provide our youth with better skills, and measurable, so they would know what it meant.

"A database system providing youth with information about training."

Interjection.

Mr Harris: That's all right. The only thing I would say on the ones I agree with—you were in government for five years, what did you do? You took all the money and you frittered it away; you spent it on yourselves and you forgot our young people; you forgot about building and training for the future and that's one of the reasons we're in this mess today as well.

I know there are many aspects that my colleagues wish to talk about, but I really and truly wanted to say I agree with this discussion today. We support bringing this topic to the forefront so we can talk about this problem that Mr Burnett had brought to my attention in North Bay, that I have found as I travel across this province.

I tell you this: If we do not deal in a forthright, direct and constructive way with what our young people are going to do; with the loss of hope and pride and opportunity that they for 42 years thought this province—not everybody, but the majority—provided the opportunity; and then eight years of gradually deteriorating, deteriorating, deteriorating to this point, now the highest-taxed, biggest government—we've got all the records.

I was always intrigued with the record that we got. We're the best borrowers now in the world. We got this award in Europe that Ontario knows how to borrow money better than any other government or company in the world. No wonder. That's what we do best. We borrow money and then fritter it away.

I really and truly welcome the opportunity to advance ideas and constructive criticism as to how we can give our young people hope and I conclude with this: I want our young people to know—those who are leaving Ontario today and they are many; those who are travelling the world, many of them learning other languages, and I applaud them for that; many who have just sort of said: "There's a two- or a three-year hiatus in our life. We're going to have to set back career opportunity. We can't afford to carry on in school."

There are so many in this category.

I want to say to them that this stretch of Liberal socialism in this province is coming to an end. We are going to restore hope and opportunity and prosperity to this province. Our finest days, our best days, are ahead of us in this province. We have the policies, we have the team, we have the capability and the management skills and the leadership to bring this and more to this province of Ontario, and that's what we're fighting for.

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): The wonderful thing about being elected as an MPP is you get to participate in some debates that sometimes get a little bit partisan, and that's exactly what an opposition day is.

As I read this resolution, as presented by the official opposition, it talks about the Ontario youth who are faced with this jobless crisis right now. The youth aren't alone; there are a lot of people out there who are unemployed right now. The fact of the matter is that government, the Liberal government of the day, could have gone on to the fall of 1992 before forcing an election on the province of Ontario, but it had no plans. They didn't have any plans to deal with the problem. They lacked any sort of policy initiatives that were going to be able to bring them through it. So what did they do? They called an election and the NDP came in. It had to develop some programs and some policies.

They don't mention for a fact that in the beginning of their term—when they first started with their first mandate they didn't talk about the 16% of young people, young families, who were in the poverty levels. By the time they left office, they were up to over 33%. They don't mention that, of course, because they left people out. They didn't talk about a lot of the problems that people faced and they've got to deal with it.

As we came out of the last recession, that party over there—the Liberal Party—could have come up with a plan. What was their plan during the last recession? They didn't have one when they came out of it so they called a snap election to deal with it.

They say the NDP hasn't got plans, summer job programs, that we need to have something like that. I want to tell you right now that this government, for the year 1992-93, has increased its financial commitment to programs by \$20 million, to a total of \$180 million. I'm going to leave that for some of my colleagues to talk about a little bit more, because we all realize that there are problems and we've got to deal with them.

1610

We have to take a look at the long term. We can't just come up with a bunch of quick, ad hoc programs. What we've got to do is take a look at improving education and training for the long term as we go through economic renewal. We have to do that. It's something that we've got to do, and doing that, we've

got to develop an effective long-term plan for education reform. Yes, we've got to do it.

We've got to start coordinating some things like skills development and bring in knowledge as is needed and bring the whole thing together and some reform that obviously they didn't feel they could do; otherwise they wouldn't have called that early election. We could have been sitting here listening to their programs maybe now, but they knew that they wouldn't have had a chance, so they called their snap election and didn't want to have to deal with the very difficult problems that we are dealing with.

If we take a look at what this government is doing on the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, you know, when we came into office, there were over 44 different programs by a dozen ministries, all dealing with this issue.

Interjection: Patchwork.

Mr O'Connor: It was all patchwork. It was program after program put in but no real sense of order to the whole thing. This government, the NDP government, is working on that. They're going to fix that up and clean it up and get it going in spite of the delay tactics being forced on us by the opposition because they don't want to deal with it. They didn't have a plan to deal with it; we're going to deal with it.

They like to stand up here and say, "Well, the government's got to do this, the government's got to do that." Sometimes we just forget about the people in our communities back home that have programs that work, some programs for youth, some chances that we get for our youth to get experiences.

Right on the front page of the *Sunderland Sun* there's a little thing there about the 4-H programs. Even in rural Ontario, 4-H programs and the people involved in them are offering some good experience for people that doesn't cost government money, but the opposition would just as soon forget about that because those people, the youth in rural Ontario, don't matter. Well, I disagree with them.

If we take a look at other programs that are offered, we just spend money, spend money. I want to tell you about another one. "The Brock youth group gets a start on summer programs." It's not something that they're coming to the government and saying, "We want some money because we've got to do something." No, they're making use of existing arenas, facilities that are in there; they're going to make good use of them. For the youth, this discussion has led to an agreement that the youth group can use the community centre auditoriums when the township staff are onsite.

Here's an opportunity where we can take a look at programs that aren't going to cost a lot of money—because I know the Liberals like to spend money. That's why we're in this situation now. We're

dealing with that. As you know, we've introduced legislation to date, very difficult, trying to deal with those situations. But at the same time, they want to spend money.

Let's take a look at one of the examples that they used as a problem: the co-op programs. The cooperative programs should be expanded and encouraged to grow. I agree with that, but what they forget is that a fundamental part of the cooperative program is that you need employers to be able to get the youth involved. We're dealing with that. We've got the Jobs Ontario fund and we're dealing with that aspect of it. What we need to do is make sure that we can encourage that to grow. You don't just go out and say, "We want it to grow." You need to have employers as part of that program, and that's what we're doing. We're dealing with that.

If we just take a look, for example, the province has a program, this government has a program for school workplace apprenticeship programs. Last year we had 35 boards. This year we've got 95 boards, 95 boards across this province that recognize that if we get students started in apprenticeship programs earlier on, we can expand that.

They don't talk about that because that's a positive thing, and opposition days are to talk about how negative the government is. Well, there are a lot of good things, positive things that are happening that they forget. I guess that's why they're opposition. They've got a short memory; they forget that they had time to go on and try to fix things but they had no programs. But this government isn't doing that. We're being proactive and we're looking at things. We're improving on things.

It's pretty easy to sit back and criticize, but we're not hearing the programs. They're saying, "Spend some money on something," but they're not telling us how we should be spending it. It's pretty easy for them to sit back in opposition and just criticize, but where are they in trying to help? What we need to do is establish like the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. But they're not trying to help us on that. It's something that we need to do, because we've got a lot of partners out there that need to be brought in to make something like that work. It's a difficult process, and anything that's difficult, the opposition says: "Well, let's call an election. We don't have to deal with that."

There are a lot of programs that the government has moved forward on that the opposition had no intention of dealing with. That's why we're here now as government, and we're dealing with them. It seems the opposition has finally recognized that there are some problems in Ontario. You think back to when they first became the government in 1985. There were a lot of problems because we were coming out of a recession back then, but they didn't have any plans. If they had, we could have very easily used their plans and continued on, but they didn't have any plans to deal with it so we're

coming up with our own plans, plans that are going to work, and that's an important thing we need to do.

They talk about a pre-university program. That's possible now, but they don't recognize it's possible now because they've got their own programs, their own ideas, their own plans that they didn't have the courage to introduce and work on, and I find it rather strange that they wouldn't try dealing with some of that.

Of course, why would they forget about the people of the community that have things going right now? It's important. Let's not forget about the people in our local communities, some good, hard-working people in our communities who have good alternatives that we should be looking at, being part of that. We can work with young people in our community. We can work with the volunteers that will help the young people in our community. The opposition don't want to do that. They just want to spend some more money. That's the alternative they've got, and I guess maybe that's why we're in the bind we're in, because they didn't have any recognition of some of the serious problems that we face.

I'm going to close with that. I'm disappointed that the opposition hasn't pointed out some real alternatives rather than to spend a bunch of money. It's rather disheartening, but I'll close with that and save some time for my colleagues to speak on this very important issue.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): I am very happy that my leader has brought forward this motion, an extremely important motion about the crisis of our young people. It has reached a situation of crisis, where they are unemployed.

As I listened to the leader of the third party, who hasn't read the motion properly or even read our proposal properly, he talks about how we have not costed out our program properly. I should advise him at the outset that these things are costed out to every detail of the dollar.

I am so sorry that the member for Durham-York is leaving, because he was blabbering around a bit and had more noise in his remarks than any facts or strategies at all. I hope he'll read some of the Hansard when he gets the opportunity, to find out the constructive way in which we're going to approach this huge unemployment crisis situation that we are in.

There are about 1.5 million youth in Ontario at present, and over the past three years youth unemployment rates have steadily increased. Today in Ontario, unemployment rates have escalated to an astounding 20.4%, and if you work that out in numbers, that's about 190,000 youth who are presently seeing unemployment. In some communities the situation is much worse, with unemployment rates climbing as high as 26.3%.

As the economy continues to contract and downsizing remains an important objective for the public sector, as you know, in this social contract negotiation and proposed legislation, and also with the downsizing of the private sector corporations, such developments have effectively reduced the number of entry-level, career-track positions.

Also, with economic restructuring and downsizing, the number of summer jobs has been drastically reduced, if not eliminated. I've listened to the member for Durham-York. He talks about one program where he may have seen some youth being employed, and then using that to equate it around Ontario, ignoring the statistics that show that far fewer young people are employed now than ever before.

1620

Unemployed youth are no longer mostly students seeking temporary employment, or high school drop-outs. Unemployed youth are those who have done what we have all asked them to do, what we've all dictated to them to do, "Go out and get an education, and then when you come back, go and get a degree, go and get a diploma."

Some of them are coming back and saying, "I am ready," and what they face is a government that doesn't have the understanding of the crisis they are in. They have taken away money in some programs, and they have not increased programs that have been successful, like the Futures program.

I raised in the House earlier that there is only a 7% increase in the Futures program, not even keeping abreast. That 7% is over the time that this government has been in power. It has not increased the Futures program. This is a program that showed extreme success during the time the Liberal Party was in power.

I don't want to get into a discussion where we're going to blame each other, as I heard from the third party leader and the government people, and talk about: "It was the Liberals' fault at that time. That's what caused it." What we must focus on is the dilemma, the crisis we find ourselves in today, with our young people out of jobs.

I was at a seminar, a panel discussion just last week at St Christopher House, and I heard young people and people who are concerned about our young people and where they're going express, in all forms, what a crisis we're in. Some of those individuals are so concerned that they presented themselves in the gallery today and would like to hear what the government has put forward as its program and what the third party has put forward as its program.

These are serious people. They are serious in their concern about the youth employment situation in the community. They put forward a series of recommendations after we sat down and talked, and I'd like to read

that for the record. They put a total of 17 recommendations of the direction they think the government should go in, in assisting especially those young people who need to be addressed in regard to employment.

What we sat down and talked about, and the theme of that evening when I spoke about it in question period today, was "Beyond Summer Employment: Long-Term Strategy for Youth Employment." They put forward a series of recommendations.

They talked about funding: "That funding to provincial youth employment and training programs be increased to respond to the high level of youth unemployment in Ontario."

They talked about the Futures program. They said, "That Futures program placements, which are currently 12 weeks in duration, be increased to one year in length to allow for an adequate training period for youth."

They also talked about a proposed one-year Futures program after graduated subsidies to employers, in which the cost-sharing of the placement evolves from a complete government subsidy to full employer responsibility.

Number four, which they put forward so well: "That Provincial youth employment and training programs address the needs of severely disadvantaged youth," because these are the people who are most vulnerable in our society.

Of course, those who have diplomas and degrees may be able to get up later on because they have the resources, if and when the economy bounces back; not under this government, of course, because the way things are going we don't think that will happen. But hopefully they will start seeing the light and I hope they get the economy going again: "That pre-employment programs be funded within provincial youth employment initiatives to address," as we've often heard, "the barriers experienced by severely disadvantaged youth seeking employment."

They talked about representation: "That youth be represented on the governing body of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board as well as the local board level."

It is surprising how this government defends its position, speaks about youth with such passion, but does not want to listen to the youth themselves who could be placed on that Ontario Training and Adjustment Board to hear at first hand.

I remember when they were in opposition that they would come into the House and parade all the young people and all the disadvantaged people in the gallery and point to us as government people and say: "These are the people who are disadvantaged. We are listening." As soon as they got into power, I think their ears were clogged and they stopped listening and said, "We will be the surrogate and speak on behalf of all young

people who are suffering."

They're saying they have something to say to you, not a lot of babble that we hear today, and they have resolutions: "That youth and youth employment workers should be consulted"—they ask for that—"by the provincial government in determining youth employment and training strategies and programming."

They go on and on about their recommendations, about voluntarism and continuum of services. They talk about community economic development for youth. They talk about work and school options and the co-ops that we speak about expanding. They talk about employment barriers faced by newcomers, young people, and how the Canadian experience line is always given to them. They talk about government coordination, that many of these programs are poorly coordinated, and of course when I was the Minister of Skills Development, I observed that there was a need for that government coordination. They also talk in their recommendations about business and labour participation.

They are crying out, these young people, for help. They're asking seriously, why has this government abandoned them?

Mr Speaker, I want to have some quotation here and see if you could recognize these very eloquent and very well said words:

"The quality of education you are fighting for will only come when governments are prepared to recognize education as the crucial investment in the future that it is. Governments which fail to invest in education, as has been the case so clearly in this province in the past decade, are not simply shortchanging a generation of students; they're literally shortchanging the country. As information and knowledge become more and more crucial to a collective future, a failure to invest undercuts the very basis of economic growth and economic prosperity."

Such fine words, so profound, so right on: said by Bob Rae. What happened to him today? What happened to the commitment and the conviction that he showed in 1984?

I know what happened. Absolute power has corrupted his mind to a point that he does not listen to the young people.

I know my colleagues want to speak on this issue. I am extremely concerned about the direction we're going in, and so are those other colleagues who want to express their views. I'm saying to this government, do something for the youth of our country. They are the people where our investment lies for our future.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): I'm pleased to participate in this debate, as I know all members are. Some of us were young once as well and knew just how difficult it was then to just go out and look for a job, even if they were there. Now it's doubly difficult

because for young people, when they get up the energy and the conviction it takes to go out and start looking for that job, the likelihood of finding one is less than it should be.

I think there are a lot of ingredients to the problems we're dealing with, and I guess part of my concern is that this whole debate is a little late. We're talking about June 14, and if ever this was going to be something the House should have been debating, it should have been in last October for this year. It takes about nine months to get the programs going and working. It takes a long period of time for jobs to be prepared and ready for young people to move into them.

Here we are at the very last minute. You've got the summer heat outside and for young people high school will be finished in a couple of weeks, if it isn't already, and there are university students. Many of my own young people in my riding still haven't found a job. It's not good to be suddenly dealing with it last minute-ish, but that indeed is probably where the Liberals are coming from with their motion. They suddenly realized there's a problem out there so they brought forward this motion.

1630

I will support the motion. I think the issue is well worth the time to discuss even now. If only we could lead to a better solution in the future; that come this time next year, there won't be a need for this discussion or debate and we will have done everything a little bit better to assist those young people who are in search of a job.

You have to realize that if you're going to apply for the Ranger program, you get your application in by September. They serve those who get their application in first, not those that come in during December or January. It's not by how much better you are; it's just that you fit the age criteria and you have your application in on time and in ahead of someone else.

We didn't even get information about the Jobs Ontario program until less than a month ago. In terms of these programs which are traditionally serving the needs of young people who can't find a job elsewhere, within the private sector, the provincial government didn't come out with its programs until the April-May time frame.

Let's get things in order of importance and start earlier, so that these programs can be approved and ready to roll early on so that young people have a chance to react in time to do something for themselves. I get so frustrated. We had the Experience program, and we still have it going and it's partially funded by Jobs Ontario, but you don't hear about it until after the budget comes out.

Let the government work according to the time frame in which young people have to work. They have to find

the jobs early on. Make those programs available early on in the year, so that while they're at university, before they get into exams, before it's a last-minute rush, the programs are defined, they're delineated and they're available. But not so, and the frustration that permeates all across the province is that whatever programs the province does have, because they come out at the last minute, there isn't enough information on them, it takes too long to get all the career counsellors and the employment centres up to speed on what's available, young people are missing an opportunity.

I have to feel that a number of the parts of the Liberal motion before us are really dealing with the symptoms. The problem out there is that yes, there's unemployment; yes, there is a youth problem; yes, we have a need for more jobs; yes, we need to have more funding from the province to help finance these jobs; and yes, we need to have more information. But do you know something? The real way to find jobs is to get a healthy, strong economy again. Get it so that employers are going to want to hire young people once more to be part of a thriving, growing corporation.

Government can do its thing by providing funding and assistance programs and having programs within the park system or the different highways opportunities, but provide an environment for business to want to invest in its company by hiring young people. If you have an environment where business is starting to grow again, they're going to say, "Yes, I will take a young person on to help me out," and it might grown into a more full-time job for someone else or a continuing job for that young person.

But because of Bill 40, this government has done more to shake business down and cause it to lose its confidence in the future of Ontario. Because of the budget, we've hit the tax wall in this province, and businesses that might have had some money to spend on another job for another person will not have that money because they're going to be paying more money in taxes in 1993-94, so again, fewer jobs. People forget that this very budget that the New Democrats have brought in, a \$2-billion tax increase, will mean the loss of 50,000 jobs in the province of Ontario. For every \$40,000 of more taxes, there's another job gone. The dippers are dipping into our pockets and our lifestyles because of the lifestyle they're trying to create, which isn't a lifestyle that balances out the needs of all the people of the province.

The motion before us today, as right as it might be, is still dealing with the symptoms. Deal with the fundamental need for a strong economy so that we're able to build and create jobs for the long term in the province of Ontario.

Where do we go? One of the things I've done in the last 10 years since I've been a member—I've been that longer; time does go by. I have a job seminar, a summer

employment seminar, and I run it with our local cable station, Classicomm systems in Richmond Hill, which serves the southern part of York region. We have a panel of experts who come in and go over the different ingredients of what it takes to find a job, and it's applicable to high school students, university students, to adults, to anyone who's in the process of looking for a job. This little booklet we've done and this program we carry each year cover: self-assessment and preparation; identifying potential employers; how to convince an employer to hire you, in other words, how to go through the whole process of having an interview; and the preparation of your résumé.

If anyone wants copies of this little booklet, they can obtain them—I'll send them to them—by calling my office, 475-0021. The government will pay the stamp and the government paid for the printing costs, and it's there to help young people in my riding. I've given out thousands of these—they're in every school in my riding—to help young people find a summer job; that's something I've been able to do just as an MPP. In some of my seminars, I've had every young person who came offered a summer job. I've tracked it: Almost all those young people who started early found a summer job. When you wait till the last minute, then it becomes quite a different problem.

When my leader, Mr Harris, was speaking a moment ago and didn't have his book with him, I happened to reach for mine: *Blueprint for Learning in Ontario*. This is a volume that our caucus has put out which goes into a number of the things that we would do to help create opportunity for young people.

My timing is such that I'm not sure just how long I have, with other members participating, but there are sections in here that will elaborate on how we support technology programs, how we want to get more science and math programs going, our whole emphasis on cooperative education, which we support.

We have a number of sections, as well, on colleges and universities, how to get more young people in university. We have a section here on student assistance, to help them get there. This government has really flopped on providing assistance to university students; there's a section on how to get private sector involvement.

Again, if someone wants a copy of that, they can certainly call us.

It's an important subject. I'm there to work for our young people. Let's see if we can come up with some concrete suggestions today that will lead to solutions for next year at least.

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): It's a pleasure to be able to stand today and speak on such an important subject. Our government recognized the need for stronger efforts to help a greater number of young

people achieve success in education and to make effective transitions from school to the workplace and to further their training.

This morning I had the opportunity to speak to some young people in Guelph. We were talking about the opportunities that existed in the future for many young people, and instead of their talk being negative, instead of ranting as the opposition is ranting about nothing being there for them, they said, "No, there are opportunities for us, opportunities if we wish to be creative."

Some of the creative things they were looking at were how we can work in our environment, how we can protect our environment, be entrepreneurs, by creating products and creating services that not only protect our environment but also move along and help young people into the workforce.

School boards have been forming agencies and partnerships with business through the SWAP program. As a trustee with the Wellington county public school board many years ago, we started SWAP, and we started by looking at how we can create a partnership, not only with business but also with labour and also with the education system. As we started to develop the program—and I have to admit that the late George King, who was a dear friend of mine, had a lot to do with this, lent a big hand in this—we started to go out to industry and ask them: What can we do? How can we help you and how can you help us? I think that's something we have to look at, the partnerships that have to be created—

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: On this very important issue of youth unemployment, I think the government should be providing a quorum. There doesn't appear to be one present.

1640

The Deputy Speaker: Would you please check if there is a quorum?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is present. The member for Guelph.

Mr Fletcher: Before I was rudely interrupted—when we started our program and we decided that we had to create some partnerships with the business community and the labour community, we asked them how we could help each other, and they said: "Well, what we're lacking right now is actual training, training of people to take the place of people who are going to be retiring. How can we adjust to the technological changes that are going on?" So we introduced this SWAP program. We were one of the first school boards in Wellington county to introduce this program, and I'm very proud of that fact.

Youth employment and unemployment affects a wide range of clients with a diversity of needs. These people are coming from high school; they're coming from university. I remember that when I was going to high school it was easy to have a job, and when I entered university I had all kinds of jobs; I was back and forth. But that market has dried up now. I think what we have to look at is not so much how we create jobs for youth but how we help the business community create jobs for youth, and there are many ways that this government is working in that direction.

Unfortunately, what we've heard from the opposition side is, "You're not doing enough." No government has ever done enough for unemployment as far as youth is concerned. Even during the times when I was going to school, there were a lot of young people who couldn't find a job. It isn't something that's new. It isn't something that's just happened overnight. It's something that has grown. It's grown and it's grown, and we have to put an end to the growing fact that youth are being neglected in our society. What this government has tried to do, what this government has attempted, is to create the partnerships, the partnerships that are going to not only help employers but help the employees, and the employees are going to be the youth of our country.

This province has probably one of the largest untapped resources in our youth that we've ever experienced, and unfortunately, we've allowed the problem to exacerbate over years. Now, to listen to the opposition say, "You haven't done anything; you haven't done a thing about it," it throws it back in my face because they didn't do anything either.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): It's a little hypocritical, I think.

Mr Fletcher: I think the member is correct. It is a little bit hypocritical to be saying that we are the problem. No, I think it takes all sides to be working together, all sides to be creative, and also to start creating those partnerships, those partnerships that have to be there so that our youth can have those jobs.

This government has chosen to respond comprehensively to the complexity of the issue rather than just rely on short-term initiatives. We have taken the long-term steps that we are going to be needing so that youth unemployment is no longer one of the biggest problems in our province. We're responding with our economic renewal agenda, which includes creating jobs and training and employment opportunities for all workers. The Jobs Ontario Training fund target which my colleague was mentioning before: We target 18% of these positions for youth. This is something that this government takes seriously. It isn't something that we have just put to the side burner.

There are those around who say that youth unemployment increased dramatically September 6, 1990. Well, that isn't a true fact. The true fact of the matter is that

youth unemployment has been with us for many, many years. For every economic downturn, it is the youth and usually women who suffer most in our society.

The economic downturn that we're in right now, there is an end; there will be an end. Whether it will be as dynamic as the previous upturns or not waits to be seen, but the one thing that this government takes pride in is the fact that we have not forgotten our youth and that the Liberals and the Conservatives are not the protectors of our youth, that it takes all parties to work together.

M. Gilles Bisson (Cochrane-Sud) : C'est avec plaisir que j'ai l'opportunité aujourd'hui de répondre aux questions posées par l'opposition officielle de la province de l'Ontario faisant affaire avec les chances de trouver de l'emploi pour nos jeunes cet été et autres étés qui vont venir.

On comprend très bien qu'en Ontario, comme dans d'autres juridictions autour dans le pays du Canada, on se retrouve dans une situation où il y a beaucoup de jeunes, et non seulement des jeunes mais des adultes qui se trouvent sans emploi, et ils se trouvent sans emploi pour beaucoup de raisons, comme vous le savez.

Premièrement, on se trouve dans le milieu d'une récession, une récession qui est mondiale, on dirait, en caractère. On sait que dans d'autres juridictions, comme aux États-Unis, comme en Europe, comme au Canada, on se trouve dans une situation où notre économie a été réduite d'une manière très significative faisant affaire avec le nombre d'opportunités pour emploi. Ça fait partie de notre problème, et je sais que les députés des deux partis de l'opposition reconnaissent ce problème-là.

L'autre affaire dans cette question-là, c'est qu'on se trouve aussi dans une économie aujourd'hui, en 1993, à cause de la mécanisation de nos industries, où on a besoin de moins en moins de travailleurs et de travailleuses pour faire et construire les mêmes produits qu'on a achetés il y a 10 ans, 20 ans, etc.

Pour en donner des exemples, comme les députés le savent, dans l'industrie des mines dans le nord, où je me trouve, pour produire 3000 tonnes de matériau par journée, comme de l'or etc, on va dire qu'on aurait besoin d'environ 800 employés pour être capable d'opérer une mine de cette grandeur-là. Maintenant, avec la technologie d'aujourd'hui, c'est totalement changé ; tu peux opérer avec environ 200 à 300 employés.

On sait que, quand il commence à avoir des réductions dans l'emploi pour toutes sortes et n'importe quelles sortes de raisons, les effets, ce n'est pas seulement sur les travailleurs et les travailleuses à plein temps, mais aussi de quoi qu'il arrive à nos élèves durant l'été.

Par exemple, dans les mines, et je vais parler des

alentours de Timmins, c'était naturel, c'était automatique : chaque été, nos élèves de l'université, du collège et même du secondaire ont eu une chance d'aller retrouver des emplois d'été dans des mines comme Pamour, la Dome, la Kidd Creek, Falconbridge, comme on l'appelle aujourd'hui ; dans nos moulins à papier à Iroquois Falls ; dans les scieries de Mallette, de Machesney, et toutes ces industries-là.

Mais aujourd'hui, ces industries ont de moins en moins de monde, et elles ont trouvé comment être capable de faire leur production avec de moins et moins de personnes, ce qui veut dire qu'elles ont eu besoin de moins en moins d'élèves durant les étés. C'est là qu'on se trouve aujourd'hui.

Je veux signaler qu'on s'y trouve, on est comme ça, pas parce qu'un gouvernement libéral ou un gouvernement NPD ou un gouvernement provincial ou fédéral est responsable de la cause. Mais on se trouvent tous, comme gouvernements, à essayer de trouver des solutions à un problème auquel il est très difficile de trouver une solution, parce que le gros problème qu'on a, c'est qu'il y a moins de jobs. Quand tu as une économie qui a besoin de moins de jobs, ça veut dire que tu as plus de monde qui est mis à pied et qui n'a pas d'emploi. C'est doublement difficile pour les élèves parce que, quoi qu'il arrive, ces entreprises-là engagent de moins en moins d'élèves.

Alors, la responsabilité, elle est à qui ? Je pense que tous les députés de cette Assemblée, gouvernement et opposition, reconnaissent que la responsabilité de créer des emplois, c'est au secteur privé. Je pense qu'on le sait. Est-ce que ça veut dire que le gouvernement provincial ou fédéral n'a pas une responsabilité ? Non. On a tous des responsabilités. Je pense que les gouvernements ont une responsabilité, premièrement, de démontrer qu'ils sont sérieux en mettant en place les mécanismes nécessaires pour une économie forte. Mais je pense qu'on a aussi besoin de signaler que les responsabilités d'emplois se trouvent dans le secteur privé. Mais quoi faire quand un secteur privé est touché, comme on le trouve aujourd'hui en 1993 ? Est-ce que le gouvernement provincial, le gouvernement fédéral ont assez d'argent dans leurs coffres pour trouver une solution pratique, une solution qui n'est pas trop cher pour tous leurs citoyens ?

1650

Je pense que les députés de l'opposition, comme les députés du gouvernement et je dirais le public, reconnaissent que le gouvernement n'a pas assez d'argent pour donner un emploi à chacun et chacune des étudiants et étudiantes dans la province de l'Ontario durant l'été. C'est une question d'être capable de faire quoi avec l'argent que tu as ? C'est ça notre problème auquel on fait face aujourd'hui.

Avec ça, le gouvernement reconnaît qu'il a une responsabilité. Ce qu'on a dit comme gouvernement

c'est que nous, on va prendre notre responsabilité. Dans le temps où il y avait une économie qui était forte, il y avait moins de demandes aux gouvernements pour des programmes d'emploi d'été pour les élèves, et les gouvernements n'étaient pas aussi pressés d'être capables de donner ces programmes-là parce que l'industrie privée était assez forte et elle pouvait combler ces postes durant l'été.

Mais aujourd'hui, on ne se trouve pas dans cette situation. On se trouve dans une situation où le secteur privé a moins et moins d'emploi.

Moi je sais, par exemple, à Iroquois Falls, que le moulin à papier Abitibi engageait d'habitude une cinquantaine d'élèves chaque été ; ce nombre est pas mal réduit cette année. Ça veut dire que le gouvernement a besoin de rentrer et reprendre la place, un peu, du secteur privé pour être capable de trouver de l'emploi pour nos élèves pour qu'ils puissent ramasser une couple de dollars durant l'été pour payer pour leur éducation postsecondaire.

Avec ça en vue, le gouvernement provincial, par exemple, a mis en place de l'argent qui a été dirigé directement pour trouver de l'emploi pour les jeunes à travers différents programmes. On va dire, il y a environ deux ans, je pense, le chiffre, au total, versé par le gouvernement provincial vers ces initiatives était d'environ, je touche un peu «rough», 20 millions de dollars à 24 millions de dollars. On trouve aujourd'hui que le gouvernement provincial, seulement sur ce programme, le youth initiatives, comme on l'appelle, a versé environ 56 millions de dollars.

J'essaie de signaler que le gouvernement provincial a dit : «Écoute. On reconnaît qu'il y a un problème dans l'économie et nous on va faire ce qui est responsable envers les dollars qu'on a dans nos coffres provinciaux, et on va essayer de mettre l'argent en place pour nos étudiants d'être mieux capables de trouver de l'emploi.» On a doublé les fonds nécessaires pour les élèves pour être capables de trouver un emploi d'été.

En même temps que ça, on a aussi fait d'autres affaires. On a dit : «Écoute. La question de l'emploi, ce n'est pas seulement d'avoir un programme chaque été qui donne de l'argent à un employeur pour être capable d'aider une personne dans le secteur privé d'engager un élève.» On a dit, «Il y a d'autres mécanismes», par exemple, le programme Coopérative Jeunesse.

On sait que dans nos commissions scolaires partout dans la province de l'Ontario, les programmes Coop sont très importants pas seulement parce que ça donne de l'expérience directement à nos jeunes concernant l'emploi, mais aussi ça ouvre une porte à un emploi pour l'été et ça ouvre aussi une porte pour un emploi à temps plein.

Moi, je le sais à mon bureau, j'ai engagé une étudiante Coop l'année passée. À ce temps-ci, c'est un

emploi à temps partiel, mais avec le temps, si les affaires changent, je pourrais l'engager à temps plein. Pourquoi ? Parce que j'ai reconnu, à travers le programme Coop, que cette personne-là, qui était une élève dans le temps, a des capacités et des acquis qui sont très bons et qui complètent mon bureau et complètent mon «staff».

Ce que cela m'a aussi donné moi, comme employer : je suis venu à la connaître. C'est bien plus difficile de dire non à quelqu'un que tu connais. Ce que j'essaie de dire c'est, par exemple, si cette même personne-là était venue à mon bureau, on va dire l'année passée, cherchant un emploi, possiblement que j'aurais dit non. Mais à travers le programme Coop, j'en suis venu à reconnaître ses capacités et finalement j'ai dit, «Écoute, c'est une personne qui fait du bon sang. C'est quelqu'un qui sait comment faire l'ouvrage et elle a comblé un poste.

Alors, je pense que nos solutions, ce n'est pas seulement de mettre de l'argent dans les programmes, mais aussi de regarder vers des programmes qui donnent des chances à nos jeunes pour être capables d'ouvrir des portes. Dans la province de l'Ontario, le programme Coop présentement, on avait additionner l'année passée 60 000 élèves dans ces programmes-là, ce qui est assez important. Je pense qu'on va le reconnaître.

L'autre affaire qu'on a dit c'est que c'est aussi important de regarder d'autres alternatives. On ne peut pas seulement prendre les dollars, comme j'ai dit dans un programme de «youth employment» et dire : «Tiens, de l'argent. Va engager quelqu'un.» Ça c'est beau mais c'est un peu court terme.

On a dit, «Écoute, y a-t-il des affaires qu'on pourrait faire sur des programmes d'apprentissage ?» Ce sont des chances qu'on peut prendre, et comme gouvernement on a dit, «Oui, ça c'est un autre aspect d'emploi qu'on peut regarder pour nos plus jeunes, pour être capables de les aider à trouver un emploi qui est un peu plus à temps plein mais qui ouvre des portes, parce que ces jeunes-là sortent.» Ce qu'on a fait c'est, on a additionné les fonds nécessaires à ce programme-là à environ 14 millions de dollars par année.

Alors, ce que j'essaie d'indiquer c'est, quoi qu'il arrive, c'est que le gouvernement de l'Ontario, le gouvernement NPD a reconnu qu'on a un problème. Le problème à travers la récession c'est qu'il y a moins d'emplois, mais le gouvernement a répondu en mettant en place les programmes nécessaires pour être capables d'aider.

Mais je veux souligner ce que j'ai dit au commencement : La responsabilité de créer des emplois se trouve dans le secteur privé. Avec un secteur privé qui est fort, on aura plus une opportunité d'employer des jeunes par l'entremise de nos entreprises. Mais on ne se trouve pas là aujourd'hui. On se trouve dans une situation qui est un peu difficile et à laquelle le gouvernement a besoin

de répondre. Puis j'essaie d'indiquer que le gouvernement NPD de l'Ontario commence à prendre des avances assez importantes sur cette question-là.

L'autre affaire, comme vous le savez, c'est qu'il y a un programme, Boulot Ontario, que vous connaissez bien, un programme qui est critiqué par l'opposition officielle, le Parti libéral, et son leader, M^{me} McLeod, mais un programme qui est très important et qui a vraiment de bonnes histoires de succès.

Moi, je connais dans ma communauté beaucoup de personnes qui sont venus à mon bureau au comté et qui ont dit, «Écoute, ça fait longtemps que je n'ai pas d'emploi et j'essaie de trouver une chance de rentrer quelque part me trouver un job, me donner une chance de sortir de l'assurance-chômage et de commencer à être productif dans mon économie de Timmins, d'Iroquois Falls, de Matheson.» Et, avec le programme Boulot Ontario, qui est mené par le collège Northern à Timmins, ils ont eu une chance de se placer dans les entreprises à l'entour de mon comté de Cochrane-Sud, de se trouver des jobs à plein temps.

Ça aussi est important, parce ce que ça revient encore : ce n'est pas seulement une question de donner de l'argent à quelqu'un, mais de donner des opportunités et de créer une situation où les employeurs se trouvent un peu plus à l'aise à engager quelqu'un à cause de l'aide financière, oui, du gouvernement mais aussi, je pense, un signalement que le gouvernement est sérieux d'être capable de travailler avec eux autres.

Mais ce qui est intéressant avec Boulot Ontario, c'est que 18 % de tous les placements de Boulot Ontario sont divisés directement parmi les élèves du secondaire et du postsecondaire. Je pense que c'est important, parce que ça signale que le gouvernement reconnaît qu'on a une responsabilité, comme gouvernement provincial, de mettre en place les programmes nécessaires pour trouver les emplois pour nos jeunes durant l'été.

Mais savez-vous quoi ? Écoutez. Je pense qu'on peut tous, dans cette chambre ici—Conservateur, Libéral et NPD—reconnaître que, si l'argent n'était pas une question, on n'en ferait plus. Si l'argent n'était pas une question, on dépenserait des milliards de dollars — pas des centaines de millions, mais des milliards. Mais, comme tout, tu peux faire seulement ce que tu as en place, avec les fonds que tu as dans ta caisse. Le gouvernement libéral précédent a su cela. Ils l'ont su, faisant affaire avec leurs cinq ans comme gouvernement. Je vois M. Beer de l'autre bord, quelqu'un pour qui j'ai beaucoup de respect. Lui, il a eu beaucoup à faire avec ces initiatives ici. Il connaît très bien le dossier et reconnaît qu'on ne peut faire que si on a l'argent en place — en fin de journée, on se trouve encore dans la province de l'Ontario avec un déficit d'environ dix milliards de dollars, et ça, c'est après que le gouvernement s'en aille et retranche quatre milliards de dollars de dépenses directement des programmes, un

autre deux milliards de dollars à travers le contrat social et deux milliards nouveaux en revenus. On se trouve encore avec un déficit de 9,2 milliards de dollars pour la fin de l'année. Je pense qu'il y a une limite jusqu'où un gouvernement peut aller.

Je pense que l'une des affaires qu'on pourrait faire comme membre de cette assemblée — tous les membres, mais spécialement les membres conservateurs dans l'autre coin — c'est qu'on pourrait parler au gouvernement fédéral et dire, «Aidez-nous un peu.» On reconnaît qu'il n'est pas capable de tout faire, mais peut-être, si on commence à travailler ensemble, on aura plus de chances à trouver une solution à ces problèmes. Si le fédéral voulait travailler directement avec la province et travailler ensemble pour trouver des économies, on pourrait prendre de l'argent et le mettre directement dans les programmes dont on a besoin.

Mais je pense que ce qui est même plus important, c'est qu'on a besoin de commencer non à prendre de l'argent et directement qu'on le mette dans les programmes ; je pense qu'on a besoin de commencer à trouver des solutions à long terme faisant affaire avec les problèmes de notre économie.

Présentement, on s'en va pour négocier l'accord de libre-échange nord-américain avec les États-Unis et le Mexique. Je pense que tout ce programme-là ne vise pas bien les opportunités de nos jeunes qui vont sortir de nos institutions postsecondaires pendant des années à venir. Je pense qu'on doit adopter des politiques économiques qui font du bon sens pour l'Ontario et qui font du bon sens pour tout le Canada. Quand on arrête de jouer de la politique et qu'on commence à travailler, comme on a été élus à faire, comme tout membre de cette assemblée, y inclus le fédéral, c'est de trouver des solutions à long terme.

Ce gouvernement est préparé à travailler avec les citoyens de la province d'Ontario et d'autres niveaux de gouvernements à trouver ces solutions à long terme — on a déjà indiqué dans beaucoup de secteurs, par exemple, dans mon coin, le gouvernement NPD a été très responsable en ce qui concerne les besoins de l'industrie des mines dans le nord de l'Ontario — et à répondre aux questions fondamentales pour cette industrie-là, pour les mettre dans une situation à trouver d'autres mines et créer des emplois pour les personnes de nos communautés et en même temps qui créeraient des emplois pour les élèves qui sortent de nos écoles.

1700

Avec ça, j'aimerais céder la place au prochain. C'est la rotation, mais j'aimerais seulement répéter le message, et le message est très simple. Ce dont on a besoin, premièrement, c'est d'une économie qui est forte. On n'a pas une économie qui est forte pour beaucoup de raisons, des raisons qui sont des responsabilités ici dans la province de l'Ontario. Mais beaucoup de raisons, je dirais à 80 %, n'ont rien à faire avec nous, les Libéraux

ou les Conservateurs, mais concernent ce qui arrive avec l'économie en général.

Est-ce qu'on a besoin de développer des programmes et mettre l'argent dedans pour être capables d'aider à trouver de l'emploi pour les jeunes ? Oui. Mais la responsabilité est la responsabilité du secteur privé. Nous autres, on peut jouer un rôle, mais on a besoin de mettre en place ce qui est nécessaire pour le secteur privé aussi.

Le point c'est que le gouvernement NPD, dans les dernières deux années, a doublé l'argent nécessaire pour ces programmes-là en réponse à ce qui c'est passé dans notre économie pour être capable de mieux donner les programmes à nos jeunes pour trouver des emplois.

L'autre, le dernier point, c'est que c'est important de ne pas seulement regarder à mettre l'argent dans les programmes mais de développer des programmes comme les programmes coopératifs, comme les apprentissages, comme boulot Ontario qui peuvent mieux aider, dans certaines occasions, les chances pour nos jeunes à trouver de l'emploi durant l'été. Avec ça, j'aimerais céder la place.

Le Vice-Président (M. Noble Villeneuve) : Je veux remercier le député de Cochrane-Sud pour sa participation au débat d'opposition aujourd'hui.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): I'm very pleased to participate in this debate because it's about probably one of the most important commodities or assets that we have in this province, in this country: our young people, particularly at the vulnerable ages between 15 and 24. We're coming into a time when the terminology "long, hot summer" will probably be very appropriate.

It's odd that it took a riot to get the government opposite to act. When the riot took place, they acted very promptly and tried to put out a fire that had been smouldering for quite some time. I suggest there's a fire smouldering out there still. Young people are finding, and I'm sure each of us in our constituencies when we have to look young persons in the face, and the young persons have done what they have to do in terms of education, coming out for the summer, looking for employment, looking for a way to make their way in life—there isn't any and it's really sad.

I think this is an issue that is of such importance that it should really rise above partisanship. In fact, the government of the day, if it wanted to do something really worthwhile, would look at this issue in terms of perhaps even a royal commission. It doesn't do any good to tell your deputy ministers and your civil service staff, "Cut 10% out of the budget," and not make sure that when they're cutting that 10% out, they're not cutting out the future of this province. I suggest they may very well be doing that, because by cutting out 10% here or 10% there, they're reducing the opportu-

ities for youth, for young people between 15 and 24, to be able to fund their continuing education.

We tell young people, "Go and work." We tell them, "If you work and you put in the effort, the rewards will be there." Well, I have to say that the rewards are no longer there. There are young people who are totally despairing.

The only thing that's really saved them over the last little while is the fact that they have been able to continue their education. There was some work during the summer. We've seen this government cut the guts right out of all the programs, such as the Ranger program which was reduced by about 50%, environmental programs reduced by 50%, very unwise cuts. You're cutting at the very heart and soul of this province. You're cutting at the future of this province. You're telling people on the one hand, "Do these things; go get an education; work hard," and on the other side of the coin, you're dropping them right on their face.

I suggest this issue is so important that what we perceive we're saving now, we're going to pay for in the long run down the line. We'll pay for it in all sorts of government services and additional costs. It's really a time bomb that's ticking, and I think it's time that all the members of this Legislature, on a non-partisan basis, looked at this issue and tried to determine, how are we going to achieve those results with our youth? How are we going to give them the opportunities?

I suggest a few. I know that Mr Clinton in the United States had suggested this, but I'd actually considered it well before. Canadians are great volunteers, particularly young people. They're extremely good volunteers. They care about doing charity work, they care about doing good works. It's a good thing for them to do, as well. We have universities and community colleges. The universities tend to be very overburdened, but the community colleges in some areas have many spaces. Why can we not allow these people to get credits for these good works that they do in their communities and thereby be able to continue their education? Rather than having dollars to pay for it, they're doing it by credits. That's one area, I think, of interest.

The other thing, too, is that many of these people who are coming out of community colleges and out of universities have a real difficulty because their curriculum vitae or their résumé starts out with, "During the summer, I cut grass," or, "I did this or that." They're usually menial tasks they have taken on in order to secure the funds to be able to educate themselves. An employer who looks at that really has some difficulty in terms of judging whether that person should be employed by him in a particular role. I think we have to encourage the private sector to join hands with government in terms of investigating this problem, in terms of solving this problem. It's not something that's going to be solved simply in the public sector. It has to be a

combined effort.

This government, for some reason, has difficulty in terms of joining forces with the private sector. They seem to think they're the enemy. In fact, they are going to have to help us solve this problem or our youth of tomorrow are going to be people who are going to be so frustrated they'll either move out of the province or go on to something else and leave their education and their training behind.

We've spent an awful lot of money in terms of capital, in terms of teaching staff and so on in order to encourage young people to take advanced education, and we're going to lose all that unless we're prepared to recognize that this is a very necessary process.

I have a few minutes left. My other colleagues want to speak.

The question of co-op education: I would like to see a mix-and-match routine between community colleges and universities. We find in community colleges that some of the courses have to be cancelled because they can't get sufficient participants in those courses, yet at the university level you find many courses where the rooms are so full that they have to have other rooms set aside with television in order to allow these people to get a proper instructional hour or two of the particular program.

We could encourage young people perhaps to take a little bit longer in terms of their total education, be that a community college education or a university education or an apprentice program, which is clearly what we need. We need to help those people and train them for those jobs if they don't intend to go to community college or to university.

Going back to the university mix and match with community colleges, we could take some of the burden off the university by giving a person an opportunity to take a year of community college, perhaps then a year of university, and then go back to the community college. In the meantime, what you're doing is that you're moving these young people around, you're giving them some practical experience as well as academic experience. That is very important, because if they're to go out and get a job in society, it will not be enough that they know Plato wrote whatever or Socrates died by drinking hemlock. All of those things are very good in terms of creating the individual, but they are certainly not the things that are necessarily going to get you a job.

In order to give my other colleagues the opportunity to speak, I'm going to just say one or two other things and then pass it on to my colleagues.

The money that we save in terms of the difficult financial situation we have in this province is admirable, but don't save it on the backs of young people, because what you're doing is very shortsighted. It's a situation

where you save a few dollars here and there—and other areas may be important, may be beneficial—but in the long run, the money you're eking out of those university and community college and training programs for young people in terms of establishing jobs or assisting them in working is something very shortsighted, and we will pay for it in spades down the line.

I urge the government members to support this resolution. It's a good resolution. It provides some very positive aspects of how we may deal with this issue. I think it merits the support of all the members of this Legislature to deal with people who we should all be concerned about: young people. Let's give them the start. Let's not depress them or make them despair. Let's not let them give up. Let's keep their faith going. Let's try to make them vibrant and optimistic. I suggest that's not happening in the present scenario, because cuts are just being made without any anticipation of what those cuts will mean in the future.

I want to thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity of speaking on this very important issue, and I'll save some time for one of my other colleagues.

1710

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): It's a pleasure to participate in the opposition day motion today, and I indicate that I would certainly agree with the fact that Ontario's young people are facing, this summer in particular, a job crisis.

The unemployment rate, as indicated here, for those young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years, is currently at 20.4%, and that is certainly an increase over very high rates that we have seen in the last two years. We have presently approximately 200,000 young people who are out of work in this province. I think this indicates that there is indeed a chronic and deep-rooted economic problem, and this government unfortunately has no strategic plan whatsoever to help our young people deal with the unemployment crisis. It has been dealing with this situation in a very, very ad hoc manner and it certainly has not dealt effectively at all with the obstacles our young people are facing. It's very unfortunate, because I would say this is probably the summer of greatest despair for young people in this province.

I was speaking to some of our young people last week. Several of them were students who were about to embark on college and university educations. Others were students who already were enrolled in universities and colleges. Their comments to me indicated their discouragement; in fact, some of them were feeling very depressed. They had been diligently searching for a job since Christmas and they had been unable, in most instances, to find even a part-time job, a job for one day a week.

They indicated to me that if they were not able to find some part-time employment between now and September when the school year resumed, there was the

possibility that they would not have the necessary funds to pay for tuition and for their living expenses. Unfortunately, this government seems to be totally unconcerned that young people are not going to be able to access the educational and training opportunities that will provide them with well-paying jobs in the future and allow them to lead productive lives.

A good example of this is the example we have in the region of Waterloo, where we have a very successful program. It is a youth employment, education and training project, and it is operating in downtown Kitchener.

Prior to January 1992, this project and this program was providing services in separate locations and, as you can imagine, this provided some difficulties for clients. However, our community was very innovative, and it's quite unique: The Waterloo County Board of Education, the Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board, Conestoga College and Lutherwood all came together and decided to provide a coordinated, one-stop-shopping concept for unemployed young people between the ages of 16 and 24.

This project offers job information resource services, employment counselling, self-directed high school programs, the Futures program, a housing registry and an independent living skills program. Indeed, I want you to know that this program has become a model for cooperative and integrated delivery of services throughout the province. That is what is so ironic: Even though other jurisdictions within this province have visited this unique and innovative project in downtown Kitchener and have decided to model their own operations on this present model, and even though they're going to get some funding, this government has rejected and decided to not continue to provide the necessary funding.

Since 1992, over 2,000 young people have benefited from this program. I'm going to give you some examples of the types of individuals who have benefited and how they have benefited. It's interesting, because the integration and the rationalization of the services in this unique partnership is the very direction the government has been encouraging service providers to provide, and yet the government is not going to continue to provide the funding. It appears that they're going to abandon the young people who have been helped. As I indicated, 2,000 young people in my community have been the beneficiaries of this project, and the government is not going to provide the necessary funding which will allow the project to continue in its present form.

I want to just read to you from an article that was in the May 4, 1993, edition of the Kitchener-Waterloo Record. It's entitled "Education Centre in Jeopardy as Government Grants Dry Up." It refers here to a gentleman called Ray Dupuis. He was 21, long unemployed, and he had only two grade 9 credits. He happened to be

walking in downtown Kitchener one day, and all of a sudden he saw the sign "Education and Training Information Centre." He decided that maybe he would go inside, because he realized that he didn't have a high school education, and he realized that if he was going to have any chance at all, he would have to do something about his present state. He walked into the building, and he says: "My life changed. The next thing I know, I'm talking to a counsellor, being assessed and enrolled in high school courses."

I can tell you that there have been hundreds of other people who have literally walked in off the street and found under one roof the guidance, the support and the practical help that they've needed, but now that's all in jeopardy because there is an absence of ongoing, stable funding from the province.

This Mr Dupuis that I spoke about is now 22. He brims with optimism and a sense of achievement. He's now talking, believe it or not, enthusiastically of an eventual college education and a career in broadcasting. He is among the individuals who, for reasons ranging from attitude to chaotic personal lives, just didn't fit into a regular high school setting; kids whose unsuccessful foray into the ever-tightening job market convinced them that a productive future rested squarely on their level of education and marketable skills.

He goes on to say, "If I hadn't found this education and training centre, I'd probably be looking at welfare for a lot of years."

I can tell you that many students have been helped by the services that are provided under this single roof. This single roof, this one-stop shopping, has eliminated the traditional barriers that young people face. It has eliminated the confusion and not knowing where to look for a place. It's an excellent idea, and every day the staff of this facility are seeing the benefits. This partnership has certainly been very, very important, because students have been able to walk in off the street, dropouts, kids living on the street, and they've been able to access this facility, and this facility, which is providing educational and training opportunities for young people, is not being given the funding it so richly deserves.

I would say, in concluding, that this government does not have a strategic plan to help young people deal with the unemployment crisis in this province at the present time. There is no educational strategy, there is no training strategy, and I can assure you that without training and without education, our young people are not going to be able to access the jobs they need.

1720

I would encourage this government to take a good look at what it is that it can do in the future, and I would recommend that it implement some of the recommendations that have been suggested in this motion in order to help our young people get back on track.

Many of the recommendations that have been put forward by the Leader of the Opposition, by the way, can be found in our New Directions document, volume 2, and I would encourage the government to take a look at that New Directions, volume 2 education and training document.

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): I hope there are young people listening today, because, believe me, the young people sitting listening today, looking at a resolution coming from the leader of the Liberal Party, must be filled with cynicism of an extraordinary degree.

I have here a press release from the leader of the official opposition. The leader of the Liberal Party claims that the government should be taking immediate action to help 150,000 young people who are unemployed, and she goes on to say that, were we to use her proposals and implement her proposals, all these people would get jobs, education and training that they need, and get this, Mr Speaker: "Our plan is based on a reallocation of existing resources and can be implemented without spending one new dollar of taxpayers' money."

The cynicism these young people feel must be of an extraordinary degree. The leader of the official opposition of Ontario is saying, "We're not going to spend another cent, and we're going to get you all jobs."

The young people out there are not silly, because we have a good educational system. We have an educational system—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think the young people may be listening, but I think it's important to have 20 members listening as well.

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The member for Cambridge can resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Farnan: As I was so quietly pointing out before we had that short pause, the Liberal leader is suggesting—and you know, young people must look at this with a jaundiced eye. They look at this and they say, "The Liberal leader is going to create 150,000 new jobs and not spend a penny." Well, the member for Renfrew North, I believe—Mr Conway—sat beside his leader today very quietly pondering her words, and on occasions he raised his eyes to heaven, because he's been around for a long time and he knows that you don't create 150,000 new jobs with not a single new dollar.

I have had a very short career here in this House, but it is very clear to me in the short time that I've been here that there are philosophical positions, there are policies and directions that the public expect from a

political party, and I believe, for example in the area of social contract, the government is giving very clear directions. On occasions, the Conservatives, the third party, indeed presents alternatives, and I admire them for that. But goodness gracious me, I have to question, I have to look at the official opposition of this House and wonder about the kind of representation it's giving to the people of Ontario. What is their position? Their position is no new taxes and increased programs. It just doesn't fit.

They are in a time warp. For five years they were at the helm. They had their moment in the sun. They had their opportunity, their hand at the helm. They could have done something, but all they did was spend, spend, spend.

Indeed, we had a situation during those years of an expanding economy. Year after year more dollars went into the coffers of the provincial government. What did they do? There was no thought for the youth of Ontario. But now they're in official opposition, having squandered the resources of this province, they want to give advice.

I tell you, the young people of Ontario are not prepared to take advice from people who have squandered their resources for five years, who have done nothing for them and who then turn around and say, "We will create 150,000 jobs and not spend a single dollar." That is an insult, an absolute insult to the youth of Ontario.

This government recognizes the critical employment situation that youth are facing and has responded accordingly.

I want to address some of the measures put forward by the Liberal Party. I'm sure they sat around in their caucus and said, "Let's get a motion because we've got to have an opposition day." They hit on the idea of youth unemployment—a good motion. Then they had to have a think tank. They gathered round and said, "What can we do to criticize the government?" Let's look at some of the things they've said and see how critical and insightful was this caucus meeting of the Liberal Party. The great minds of the Liberal Party come together and this is what they come up with.

They suggest that \$60 million be directed to summer employment for youth. In fact, we have committed \$56 million specifically to summer employment initiatives. This is about the same as last year and represents an increase of \$20 million from the funding level of two years ago. An increase of \$20 million on \$56 million represents a tremendous increase in initiative on the part of this government to youth.

What does the Liberal Party have to say? "Well, you could have done a tiny bit more." Let me say to the Liberal Party, you had your chance and you blew it. We're dealing with the issue.

What else did they have to say? They said Futures is a good program. Isn't that fantastic? They sat around and they discovered that Futures is a good program. We are pleased to agree with them. We too have recognized its effectiveness. For that reason, we have increased funding by \$3.5 million to a total of \$103 million, to maintain the same level of year-round client services last year.

1730

This Liberal think tank is really on a roll now. Let's have a look at what else they discovered. Over the last year cooperative education in our schools has expanded to over 60,000 students annually. In addition, the government has committed an additional \$13.6 million to revitalize the apprenticeship program. This includes increased funding for the secondary workplace apprenticeship, which strengthens the transition process from secondary schools to the workplace. We agree with the Liberal Party, we agree with the suggestion that youth be provided with information about training, education and job opportunity. Can you imagine that Liberal caucus? They say, "Wouldn't it be a good idea to have a place where you get information?"

I've got news for the youth who are listening. The Ontario youth and training hotline does precisely what the Liberals are asking. The toll-free hotline is widely promoted. It's accessible to all youth across the province. It responded to a total of 80,000 inquiries last year. This was some Liberal think tank for the youth of Ontario. Our government's commitment goes clearly beyond what the leader of the Liberal Party proposed today.

We believe in a big picture, and the highest priority of our government is employment and youth unemployment. Youth unemployment is just one aspect that our policies of economic development are targeted towards. Let me say to the two Liberals who are here sitting listening to this debate on their opposition motion, an opposition motion in which they are so enthused that they took this day to bring forward the youth of Ontario as the central theme.

Two Liberal members are listening to this debate, and I'm telling them, the youth of Ontario want one thing. They want a healthy economy, and that's why we have to look at the broad picture and say what we are doing. The youth of Ontario are intelligent and insightful and they can say: "Don't play games with us. Don't try and tell us that you are going to move the cups around and tell us where the pea is."

They want to see substantive programs. They want to see real programs. They want to see economic restraint. They want to see economic accountability. They want to see economic responsibility. After five years of Liberal government, that is something they never saw.

Now, with a mature social democratic government that is prepared to face the deficit, that is prepared to

face the economic challenges, the youth of today can say: "Yes, there is an opportunity for us. Yes, we have a government that continues to apply its dollars to support youth programs, but a government that is also taking care of the larger picture of our economic prosperity for the future, that is investing in training, that is investing in retraining, that is investing in education, that is investing in youth, that is investing in the future of this province."

In short, if I could make a comparison, that old Liberal regime had a philosophy. It was a simple philosophy, and by God they lived up to it. It was very simple. It was this: Live now and pay later. By God, we are paying for the sins of that administration.

We are determined to put away and put an end to that type of administration and type of government that said, "We can do and spend and spend and spend." But the reality is that the world doesn't work like that. A healthy economy demands a strong financial base, and this government, this administration, says, "We know what the challenge is." We will face that challenge, not on behalf of the youth of this province but on behalf of all the people of this province including the youth of this province.

Mr Stockwell: I'd like to pick up on a point that the member from Cambridge left off on. Frankly, just to get into that for a moment, it's rather difficult, no matter where you sit in this House, to listen to anybody from the socialist party talk about other governments and their spending habits. I won't come to the defence of the Liberals. I think they spent unwisely and maybe too much money in those five years. But if the record shows that all the Liberals were doing was going, "Spend, spend, spend," let the record show that the opposition party, the NDP, was saying simply, "Not enough, not enough, not enough."

I swear in the last six months they've all been visited by three ghosts at night and those three ghosts have come in—

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs): You swear every day.

Mr Stockwell: That was a painfully bad joke.

Those three ghosts would come in and start discussing with them fiscal responsibility. Let us not get into a fiscal responsibility argument with the socialists. It's more like a pillow fight than a fiscal responsibility argument.

I'm not one of those in this Legislature—

Interjections.

Mr Stockwell: I hear the hackles rising once again. It's a big fish fry tonight, so I'll try and work my way through. There must a lot of fish if they're going to pass the legislation they announced today, because this group here passing legislation which reopens job contracts and

rolls back wages—it's going to take a lot of perch and smelt to make these people happy, let me just say that.

Let me talk about job-creating programs that governments start. I fundamentally do not believe that a government has ever created one job in its life. I don't believe that. If a government suggests that they've created a job, to me it's just simply another form of taxes. Let's be clear about that off the top: Governments do not create jobs. The only meaningful jobs that are created from a vital economic point of view are jobs that are created in the private sector.

If you take that basic premise, then you will build from that premise and you say to yourselves, "We have a tremendous problem in youth unemployment." That is really not a terribly shocking statement, because we've got a tremendous problem with all unemployment. Whether they're youths, whether they're seniors, whether they're middle-aged, whether they're men, whether they're women, it matters not. We have a very—

Mr Paul Klopp (Huron): How about the future of the Tories? They said they would create jobs—

Mr Stockwell: I don't mind being heckled, but when they cross the floor to heckle in front of you, it does become a little difficult. Thank you very much. This place has certainly reached a new low level when the member for Huron thinks that he can now cross the floor and heckle from right in front of me.

Mrs Ellen MacKinnon (Lambton): He actually shut you up.

Mr Stockwell: Get that on the record, because I'd hate to see the member from Lambton sit for five years and not have her get on the record.

To move on, I don't necessarily believe that we're going to resolve the problem with students or young people with a wave of a magic wand. If the problem with youth unemployment is going to be dealt with, you'll find, I say to the government, that employment troubles are dealt with throughout every sector, across every generation, through every gender.

To make the suggestion that you can move this amount of money this way or that way and resolve the issue of the problem facing youth is absolutely arcane. It's insane, it's absurd. It won't happen. You could throw hundreds of millions of dollars at this problem, but the bottom line is, the private sector is not hiring. They're laying off. So how do we rebuild this province? How do we create jobs for the youth and for everybody else?

It's very obvious. We have to have an economy that's growing, that's to some degree booming and creating meaningful employment for not just youths but for everybody, and that is not accomplished with a socialist, left-wing government which introduces things like Bill 40, \$2 billion in new taxes, builds \$25-billion worth of

new debt in two years and a Premier who suggests social contracts should be negotiated over nine months so he can try and save money within three. These don't build realistic, hopeful opportunities for people in the province of Ontario.

You could quote me chapter and verse and rhyme off every program that you invest money in, and what does that tell you? We still have 20% of our youth unemployed and you're spending hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars. Doesn't that make sense to you, that these programs, no matter how well-intentioned, no matter how bent, no matter how much they want to succeed, simply don't work?

1740

They don't work because the only people that hire is the government and the government gives grants to the private sector, and the private sector uses that grant money up, and when the grant money's gone, they do away with the job. Who is that helping? They think that in the short term it's helping those people who are looking for work, but it's not because they only have a short-term job cycle and—

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): Just leave them all on welfare.

Mr Stockwell: If you want to suggest leaving them on welfare, that may be your alternative, but it's not mine.

You create more taxes for the private sector to pay that go to you. That takes money out of their coffers that they could create jobs with. But it's a natural phenomenon with any labour, left-wing, socialist government. They fundamentally believe that government can provide all things to all people at no cost. They believe it. Every labour, socialist, union-inspired government has believed that government can jump in and resolve economic crises in any jurisdiction by spending money, and every single one of those labour, union, socialist governments have been complete, absolute, miserable failures.

How do we address the problem of youth unemployment? I can address the problem of youth unemployment as well—

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): Balance the budget. What about Brian Mulroney?

Mr Stockwell: And they come back. There's the common refrain from across the benches. Whenever you talk about anything, they shout "Brian Mulroney." They're deep thinkers; they shout out "Brian Mulroney." You talk about unemployment, they shout out "Brian Mulroney." You talk about the price of eggs, they shout out "Brian Mulroney." And the world recession is Brian Mulroney's fault. They have no responsibility for any of this, and there's another problem.

The problem lies in government and particularly this government. Why is it your problem? Because you just

hiked taxes by \$2 billion. Why is it your problem? Because you just introduced Bill 40 to make us less competitive. Why is it your problem? Because the private sector isn't hiring youth or anyone else because they're not making any money.

The only way to solve the unemployment crisis is to have a healthy, thriving private sector that has profit, and that's the only way you solve any unemployment crisis. That's not a shocking, newsworthy event, Mr Speaker, but do you want to know something? It's shocking and newsworthy to this sorry lot across the floor, because this crowd continues to stand up, and this is where the mistake is made: They talk with pride of \$100 million spent here and \$50 million spent there. In a turnaround economy, that is almost a badge of shame, because for every dollar that you spend, for every dollar that you take out of the economy, you waste in bureaucratic red tape, in bureaucratic middle management, in bureaucratic waste, and how much of that dollar actually gets back to the people we're serving? Precious little; precious less than the dollar that you tax for.

In the end, there's nobody in this room who can solve the unemployment crisis for youth. Any of the youth who are watching today, don't waste your breath. It's all rhetoric. The only solution for youth and to the unemployed today is a vital, aspiring, booming economy where private sectors make profit, where private sectors hire people, where private sectors meet payrolls and where private sectors pay reasonable and fair taxes so they can aspire to hire more people and create greater provinces. That's Economics 101. Get in the game. You're wasting people's time, effort and money.

Mr Charles Beer (York North): It's a pleasure to close the special debate today with respect to youth employment. I want to say at the outset that we view this as—and I believe most of the members in this House believe this is—a critical issue. In terms of what a number of members have said today, I think we all see that there are creative ideas which all of us have in this place and that there are things that we can do, and together with the private sector, together with communities, that we can really begin to solve these problems.

I know that for my leader, in introducing this motion today, this is an issue that she has been concerned about and has spoken about for some time. Indeed, all during the leadership that our party had two years ago, she spoke clearly about the needs of young people and the things we were going to have to do to ensure there would be employment. That meant changes in the way we work with the private sector and changes in our training programs. But we have to remember what has become a truism or a cliché, that our future lies with our young people and that we've got to make sure there are going to be jobs for them when they finish their education. That's where this came from.

More specifically, and to the member from Cam-

bridge who seemed to want to ridicule what was in this motion, I would tell him, and tell him very clearly, that the ideas that are in this motion came specifically from young people, from those in the business sector who work with young people, from a whole series of communities we visited where we sat down and said, "What are some practical, doable things that we can do?" In putting this forward we were not saying, nor do we say, that this motion in and of itself will resolve all the problems facing young people with respect to employment.

Read the motion: "This House resolves that urgent action is required and that the following initiatives be included in an action plan to help our young people get the education, training and jobs they deserve...."

This would be part, it can be part, of a much broader objective of fingering the specific problem that young people face today in finding employment and getting the training they need for employment. That's something we can do together.

I have often thought that we waste a lot of work that we could do in committees, where members have ideas and where one of the most profitable things is when we tackle an issue where there is no one single solution, but where we need to go out to communities and talk with people in those communities and with ourselves to come up with ideas. Surely, youth employment is one of those.

If there is something that has been missing from this government, it has been specifically this question of leadership and vision. I don't for a moment doubt that all individuals in this House want to see the unemployment rate among young people down much lower, far below what it is today; frankly, far below what it was when we were the government or when the Conservatives were the government. But how do we do that? How do we go out and bring about the kind of cooperation that we want from the business sector and from communities to bring those programs to fruition? We've heard from a number of members here this very day about community programs that involve business, that involve the educational sector, that involve government—programs that work.

We haven't done a very good job at letting our different communities know about what works and how we can go out and try to replicate some of those different programs.

When we went out in February and March of this year, one of the things in particular that we did was to meet with those who work in the youth employment centres. We went into a number of communities. I myself was in London, Toronto, Ottawa and Kingston. Other colleagues went to other communities. We asked the people there, for the most part young people themselves who counsel students, in many cases dropouts, those who need education and training, "What are the

kinds of things you would want to do?" One of the messages they brought back loud and clear was: "Don't go out and invent brand-new programs. Don't go out and re-invent the wheel. Build on the things that work."

When the member from Cambridge ridicules that one would say, "Futures works; let's make it work better," we're simply recognizing that there are a variety of programs, some of which we may have brought in, which the Conservatives may have brought in, which this government might bring in, which work and which we can build on. Let's do that. Let's not put the money into the administration costs of trying to create new programs that are going to take for ever to get in place and begin to meet the needs of the young people who are out there.

The youth employment centres said to us: "We could do much more through the Futures program. We've got the jobs there, we've got the businesses that are prepared to work with us, but that's where we need the help." That's why we put that in these recommendations.

1750

Summer employment for youth: I doubt that any of us in this House who have young people in our families who are of high school or university age are not experiencing this year the most difficult time for summer jobs. Clearly, it is here, in my view and in our view, that government has a responsibility to lead and to say that these are important, that if we have to cut back on programs in other sectors, these summer programs are important because they allow young people to continue their education. They allow them to make the money they require to continue their university education or to go on in high school, because in many cases, with the kind of economy we have, the money that young people make, both during the school year and during the summer, is helping their family. They need that; they need it as part of family income.

Cooperative education programs at all levels: Why is that there? It's there because it works. It's there because it's something about which I think all members in this House said, "This is an excellent initiative; let's do it." Everyone in the community, whether you're talking with high school counsellors, whether you're talking with young people who've been in the program—I myself in my own constituency office have had a co-op student. Others have made reference to that. It's a program that works. It's providing real and meaningful skills to young people.

"A scholarship system that encourages businesses to contribute to the further education of youth should be established." Again, not a new idea; it exists elsewhere. There are many places in the United States where this is a very effective program, where businesses honour young people who work with them by giving them a scholarship, putting money towards a scholarship for

university, for community college. We can look at that. We've talked to businesses that have said they would be interested in getting involved in a program like that.

"A pre-university program should be established to help young people...." Again, we are not reinventing the wheel. That program exists at the University of Toronto, and I met with a number of young students who are in that program and others who wanted to go into it. Several of them were young people who had been abused physically and sexually who'd been on the street for many years, had been fortunate enough to find someone who could counsel them who got them into an alternative education program, where they were going to get their high school and were now going on to that program at the University of Toronto. I remember one young man saying to me: "We need more programs like this. We're going to find people like myself who slip between the cracks. This is going to give me an opportunity to get the post-secondary education I want." I think this is terrific, and we're simply saying, let's look at how we can do this in other universities, in other community colleges. The University of Toronto does it all by itself, with no government funds.

Finally, a database system providing youth with information about training and education: Again we have a number of programs that are out there, but if you talk to businesses, they'll tell you we need something much more substantial. We talked to a number of businesses that said, "Look, our problem at times is finding the young people out there who need the kinds of jobs we can provide."

These recommendations are what we call doable, practical. They don't stand by themselves. They are to go with other programs that are already in place that we can come up with through our collective wisdom.

Je veux dire aussi à mon collègue de Cochrane qui a parlé du besoin du secteur privé de créer des emplois. C'est sûr que le secteur privé a une obligation de créer des emplois, mais il faut aussi une ambiance à l'intérieur de laquelle on peut créer des emplois, et le gouvernement, à mon sens, a besoin de fournir du leadership.

C'est ça qui est si important, parce ce que ce qu'on voit dans ce gouvernement, depuis les élections, c'est qu'on parle beaucoup de ce problème de la jeunesse, mais en effet, il n'y a pas de plan stratégique. Il n'y a pas une approche où on dit: «C'est un problème primordial. C'est un problème clé. Nous devons faire quelque chose.»

The fundamental problem, the issue we bring forward with this motion today, is, as has been said by a number of speakers, that there is no strategic plan for youth employment. There is no one minister who in effect is speaking out on that issue and who is providing that kind of direction and leadership, who is bringing together the private sector, government and communities to say, "We know we're in a recession, we know it is

difficult, but we can find, in those communities, solutions to those problems."

In the plan which my leader put forward, which would cost \$180 million, we have said those dollars can be found by changing priorities, by finding those dollars from other programs, whether it is in stopping the nonsense of buying out the private day care operators because that's not necessary right now, or putting aside the whole Interim Waste Authority program, but take the dollars that are not serving any useful purpose and let us put it into youth employment.

I implore the members opposite on the government benches to join with us, to join with the Conservatives in supporting this motion. Why not consider the possibility of getting a committee of this Legislature to plan for next year—because we know we're into the problems of this summer right away—where we would go out and collectively as a Legislature say: "We're going to get the best ideas we can find out there. We're going to come back with an all-party report to this House which is going to ensure that we spend our funds wisely, working with the private sector, working with communities to ensure that our young people have jobs and that they are going to get the kind of training they need for the jobs of the future."

That's what this resolution and this motion speaks to. Again, I urge all members to put aside partisanship and to support this motion. Let's really say: "Youth employment is a critical problem. We are going to make sure we find the jobs for our young people." I urge everyone to support this motion.

The Acting Speaker: Mrs McLeod has moved opposition day motion number 3.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1757 to 1802.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour of Mrs McLeod's motion will rise one at a time to indicate their intentions.

Ayes

Beer, Brown, Callahan, Caplan, Chiarelli, Cleary, Conway, Cordiano, Cousens, Curling, Eddy, Eves, Fawcett, Grandmaître, Harnick, Henderson, Jackson, Kwinter, Mahoney, Marland, McClelland, McGuinty, McLeod, Miclash, Morin, Murdoch (Grey), O'Neil (Quinte), Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Poirier, Poole, Ramsay, Stockwell, Sullivan, Tilson, Turnbull, Witmer.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed will please rise one at a time and indicate their intentions.

Nays

Abel, Akande, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Charlton, Christopherson, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Coppen, Dadamo, Duignan, Farnan, Fletcher, Frankford, Gigantes, Grier, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Kormos, Lankin, Laughren, Lessard;

Mackenzie, MacKinnon, Marchese, Martel, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Morrow, North, O'Connor, Owens,

Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Rizzo, Silipo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Wark-Martyn, Waters, Wessenger, White, Wildman, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Winninger, Wiseman, Wood, Ziemba.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes being 36 and the nays 61, I declare the motion lost.

It now being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1807.

ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
30	1276	2	29	Mr Jordan: Perhaps when their park was estab-
30	1287	1	3	I think Bill 90 and apartments in houses will hold

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

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Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A.	L	
Beaches-Woodbine	Lankin, Hon/L'hon Frances	ND	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Brampton North/-Nord	McClelland, Carman	L	
Brampton South/-Sud	Callahan, Robert V.	L	
Brant-Haldimand	Eddy, Ron	L	
Brantford	Ward, Hon/L'hon Brad	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Finance / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Finances
Bruce	Elston, Murray J.	L	
Burlington South/-Sud	Jackson, Cameron	PC	
Cambridge	Farnan, Mike	ND	
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Carleton East/-Est	Morin, Gilles E.	L	Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président et Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Chatham-Kent	Hope, Randy R.	ND	
Cochrane North/-Nord	Wood, Len	ND	
Cochrane South/-Sud	Bisson, Gilles	ND	
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Don Mills	Johnson, David	PC	
Dovercourt	Silipo, Hon/L'hon Tony	ND	Minister of Community and Social Services / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Downsview	Perruzza, Anthony	ND	
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Durham Centre/-Centre	White, Drummond	ND	
Durham East/-Est	Mills, Gord	ND	
Durham West/-Ouest	Wiseman, Jim	ND	
Durham-York	O'Connor, Larry	ND	
Eglington	Poole, Dianne	L	
Elgin	North, Peter	ND	
Essex-Kent	Hayes, Pat	ND	
Essex South/-Sud	Vacant	L	
Etobicoke-Humber	Henderson, D. James	L	
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Grier, Hon/L'hon Ruth A.	ND	Minister of Health / ministre de la Santé
Etobicoke-Rexdale	Philip, Hon/L'hon Ed	ND	Minister of Municipal Affairs / ministre des Affaires municipales
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Fort William	McLeod, Lyn	L	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition
Fort York	Marchese, Rosario	ND	
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Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles	Wilson, Gary	ND	
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Kitchener-Wilmot	Cooper, Mike	ND	
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London South/-Sud	Winninger, David	ND	
Markham	Cousens, W. Donald	PC	
Middlesex	Mathysen, Irene	ND	
Mississauga East/-Est	Sola, John	Ind	
Mississauga North/-Nord	Offer, Steven	L	
Mississauga South/-Sud	Marland, Margaret	PC	
Mississauga West/-Ouest	Mahoney, Steven W.	L	
Muskoka-Georgian Bay	Waters, Daniel	ND	
Nepean	Daigeler, Hans	L	
Niagara Falls	Harrington, Margaret H.	ND	
Niagara South/-Sud	Coppen, Hon/L'hon Shirley	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation; chief government whip / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs : whip en chef du gouvernement
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Oshawa	Pilkey, Hon/L'hon Allan	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Municipal Affairs / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Affaires municipales
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Ottawa South/-Sud	McGuinty, Dalton J.P.	L	
Ottawa West/-Ouest	Chiarelli, Robert	L	
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St Andrew-St Patrick	Akande, Zanana	ND	Speaker / Président
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St Catharines-Brock	Haeck, Christel	ND	
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Sarnia	Huget, Bob	ND	
Sault Ste Marie / Sault-Sainte-Marie	Martin, Tony	ND	
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Scarborough East/-Est	Frankford, Robert	ND	
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Scarborough North/-Nord	Curling, Alvin	L	Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation / ministre de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs
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Simcoe West/-Ouest	Wilson, Jim	PC	
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Sudbury East/-Est	Martel, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	
Timiskaming	Ramsay, David	L	
Victoria-Haliburton	Drainville, Dennis	Ind	
Waterloo North/-Nord	Witmer, Elizabeth	PC	
Welland-Thorold	Kormos, Peter	ND	
Wellington	Arnott, Ted	PC	
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Willowdale	Harnick, Charles	PC	
Wilson Heights	Kwinter, Monte	L	
Windsor-Riverside	Cooke, Hon/L'hon David	ND	
Windsor-Sandwich	Dadamo, George	ND	
Windsor-Walkerville	Lessard, Wayne	ND	
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York East/-Est	Malkowski, Gary	ND	
York Mills	Turnbull, David	PC	
York North/-Nord	Beer, Charles	L	Premier, President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre, président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires gouvernementales
York South/-Sud	Rae, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	
Yorkview	Mammoliti, George	ND	

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Lundi 14 juin 1993

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 1993 sur le contrat social, projet de loi 48 M. Laughren	1353
Loi de 1993 sur la négociation collective des employés de la Couronne, projet de loi 49 M. Mackenzie	1354
Loi de 1993 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne le Plan de contrôle des dépenses, projet de loi 50 M ^{me} Grier	1354
Loi de 1993 sur le comté de Simcoe, projet de loi 51 M. Philip	1354

JOUR DE L'OPPOSITION

Jeunesse en chômage M. Bisson	1365
M. Beer	1374

CONTENTS

Monday 14 June 1993

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Carabram	
Mr Callahan	1335
Community recreation funding	
Mr Murdoch	1335
DADs Day	
Mr Mills	1335
Interprovincial trade	
Mr McGuinty	1335
Wage protection	
Mrs Witmer	1336
Coping In Tough Times	
Mr Owens	1336
Amalgamation of school boards	
Mr Beer	1336
Public transportation	
Mr Tilson	1337
Show Boat	
Mr Marchese	1337

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

Social contract	
Mr Laughren	1337
Mrs McLeod	1339
Mr Harris	1340
Collective bargaining legislation	
Mr Mackenzie	1338
Mrs Caplan	1340
Mr Harris	1340

ORAL QUESTIONS

Social contract	
Mrs McLeod	1341
Mr Laughren	1341, 1343
Mr Harris	1343
Assisted housing	
Mrs Marland	1344
Ms Gigantes	1344
Youth employment	
Mr Curling	1345
Mr Laughren	1345

Transfer payments

Mr Harris	1346
Mr Cooke	1346

Waste disposal

Mr Hansen	1346
Mr Wildman	1347

Health care

Mrs Sullivan	1347
Mrs Grier	1347, 1350
Mr Hayes	1350

Great Lakes water quality agreement

Mr Tilson	1348
Mr Wildman	1348

Municipal waste disposal

Ms Haeck	1348
Mr Philip	1348

Bridge accident

Mr Bradley	1349
Mr Mackenzie	1349

Veterinarian technology course

Mr Villeneuve	1349
Mr Buchanan	1349

PETITIONS

Public service employees	
Mrs Fawcett	1350
Mr O'Neil	1352
Ontario Film Review Board	
Mrs Marland	1350

Gambling

Mr Mills	1351
Mr O'Connor	1352
Mr O'Neil	1352, 1353
Mr Gary Wilson	1353

Automobile insurance

Mr Sola	1351
---------	------

Seniors' health services

Mr O'Neil	1351
-----------	------

Special education

Mr Villeneuve	1351
Mr O'Neil	1352

Landfill

Mr O'Connor	1351
-------------	------

Closure of agricultural college

Mr Cleary	1352
-----------	------

FIRST READINGS

Social Contract Act, 1993, Bill 48	
Mr Laughren	1353
City of Gloucester Act, 1993,	
Bill Pr18	
Mr Morin	1354
Humane Society of Ottawa-Carleton	
Act, 1993, Bill Pr82	
Mr Chiarelli	1354
Crown Employees Collective	
Bargaining Act, 1993, Bill 49	
Mr Mackenzie	1354
Expenditure Control Plan Statute	
Law Amendment Act, 1993, Bill 50	
Mrs Grier	1354
County of Simcoe Act, 1993, Bill 51	
Mr Philip	1354
Township of Atikokan Act, 1993,	
Bill Pr38	
Mr Wood	1354

OPPOSITION DAY

Youth unemployment, opposition day	
motion number 3	
Mrs McLeod	1354
Mr Harris	1357
Mr O'Connor	1359
Mr Curling	1361
Mr Cousens	1362
Mr Fletcher	1364
Mr Bisson	1365
Mr Callahan	1368
Mrs Witmer	1370
Mr Farnan	1371
Mr Stockwell	1373
Mr Beer	1374

OTHER BUSINESS

Visitor	
Mr Bradley	1350
Errata	1377

Continued overleaf

11
-023
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Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 15 June 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 15 juin 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers



Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

Table of contents

Table of contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears on the outside back cover.

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A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

Abonnements

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Tuesday 15 June 1993

The House met at 1331.

Prayers.

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't believe there's a quorum present.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the table count for a quorum, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

EVENTS IN CORNWALL

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): It is that time again when francophones in the Cornwall area celebrate their heritage during La semaine française. During Sunday's parade I was pleased to witness the friendship that existed among the francophone population in my riding. Bonne semaine française à tous les francophones à Cornwall.

I would also like to highlight the 11th annual multicultural festival, which will be held on June 27. Despite financial constraints that had threatened the survival of the festival, I am happy to announce that the 1993 gala of food, music, dance and crafts will proceed with the special assistance of the Cornwall Rotary Club.

This year's exhibition is shaping up to be a great success. I invite all members to join me, the leader of our party and the people of Cornwall and area to visit the civic complex in Cornwall to treat themselves to a multicultural festival beyond compare.

And for the eighth year, Cornwall will host a festival of traditional dance and theatre from July 7 to 11. Worldfest/Festimonde involves international performers. Its popularity has caused the event to grow steadily from what was a three-day, six-country exhibit in 1985.

I am proud to represent a part of Ontario that honours not only Canada's founding cultures but also celebrates the people who have chosen it as their home. Any member of the public looking for a fun holiday should consider taking in one of these activities.

RABIES

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I would like to advise the House and the Minister of Natural Resources of the problem the people of Grey are experiencing with the spread of rabies.

Rabies is a viral disease which attacks the central nervous system. It is spread through saliva, usually through an animal bite, and will kill all affected mammals.

I have received several letters and calls from constituents who fear for the lives of not only their sheep and cattle but their children and their household pets.

The incidence of rabid foxes, skunks and raccoons is on the rise in Grey, and something must be done. I understand that a very successful bait dropping program has been in effect in southeastern Ontario since 1989 and that ministry officials are so pleased with the results that they have prepared a proposal for cabinet's consideration which would expand it to other affected areas of Ontario.

At the present, Mr Minister, your officials tell us that the province is presently spending \$25 million a year for case investigation, diagnosis of rabies, livestock indemnity and human vaccinations. We feel that the prevention of the disease would cost no more. I urge you to consult with sportsmen's clubs, which would be delighted to assist you in this endeavour. This partnership with sportsmen and environmentalists would result in the desired elimination of this spreading disease and would greatly ease the concern of farmers who live in constant fear that their livestock and their families are in danger.

I would ask the minister to thoroughly investigate this situation as quickly as possible and press for cabinet approval of your staff's plan to help those desperately in need of it.

CAROUSEL OF THE NATIONS

Mr George Dadamo (Windsor-Sandwich): The Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County is proud to present the Carousel of the Nations 1993. The carousel takes place in various locations scattered throughout the city of Windsor. These locations of course deliver food, fun, entertainment and cultural displays.

Multicultural is the meshing and sharing of cultures and ideas with others, meant to open doors to new and diverse worlds. These worlds are filled with exciting foods and displays one is normally not exposed to.

The Carousel of the Nations is the formulation of years of hard work and perseverance by hundreds of volunteers in the city of Windsor and the county of Essex. These volunteer workers work hundreds of hours to put together what amounts to a city-wide entertainment network.

Last weekend was the first weekend of the Carousel and the beginning of six days of celebrations among all the races. The menu is as varied as the locales. The food fair will delight and tempt everyone. There's German food, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Polish, Italian and dozens more. This weekend, the culture of India will be situated at St Clair College, Greek at Holy Cross Church on Ellis Street East and Filipino at 935 Northwood Drive in south Windsor. The hours are Friday, 6 pm to 1 am, all the way through Sunday, noon to 10 pm. There are Carousel passport guidebooks, discount coupons and special lottery numbers for fantastic prizes.

The Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County invites everyone to visit all these exciting villages. We celebrate 20 years of racial harmony. The slogan: "Emphasize our similarities; celebrate our differences."

PROVINCIAL PARKS

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I'd like to bring to the attention of the House and the people of Ontario the work that this government, and in particular the Minister of Natural Resources, is doing to fundamentally dismantle and abandon the provincial park system.

The provincial parks and natural heritage policy branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources has become the latest casualty of this government in the chaos that it euphemistically describes as management. Under the new and improved Ministry of Natural Resources, responsibility for provincial parks management and policy has been divided and absorbed into different sections of the ministry. This sends a clear signal to Ontarians about the government's lack of commitment to our provincial parks.

1340

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists has condemned the rationale provided by the ministry for this reorganization. In a letter sent to the minister dated June 10 they state, "The effects of this latest shake-up have dealt what appears to us to be a mortal blow to an already weakened provincial parks system."

Mr Speaker, 1993 marks the 100th anniversary of the provincial parks system in Ontario, a system that started off with the creation of Algonquin Park and has since grown to include 260 parks covering 63,000 square kilometres throughout our province. The NDP has chosen to celebrate this significant milestone by radically and fundamentally altering the provincial government ministry that is responsible for planning and managing these important natural and recreational areas.

ACADEMIC STREAMING

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): My statement is directed to the Minister of Education and Training. Recently I have received approximately 100 letters, most of them addressed to the Premier, from young students in the gifted program at Churchill Heights Public School in Scarborough.

As a result of this government's destreaming initiative that will place all students, regardless of ability, in the same class, these students and their parents are concerned that the Churchill Heights gifted program may soon be eliminated.

I would like to take a moment to read to the minister a few sections from some of the letters.

Steven Abra writes: "This is my first year in the gifted program and I find it much better than the normal program. Last year I found the work very boring and I

didn't concentrate on my work very much."

Rex Lam writes: "The gifted program has given me benefits: the challenge of climbing to the top of the class to gain more skills. In my old school I did not have any challenge."

Prasanna Kirupa writes: "In my former school I would finish my work quickly and I had to wait for others to finish. Now I have more fun learning with my new peers."

Minister, are we not striving for excellence for our education system? Do we want to challenge our students so that they will want to learn more, rather than becoming bored and withdrawn? These students will be denied a gifted program when they enter grade 9 because of your education policies. Is it fair? Isn't our education system supposed to provide opportunities for all of our students? Have you studied the success of the special education initiative, Bill 82, for both advanced and learning-disabled students, all students with special needs, before you change the policies that are working in Ontario today?

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Ontario is at last beginning to recover from the worst recession in my lifetime, certainly the worst recession that all but our senior citizens have ever seen. But in spite of all the initiatives undertaken by our government—investments in housing, infrastructure and training—this recovery has been painfully slow in getting on track. I feel that the one group—small business—that could do the most to get the economy moving has been held back by the very institutions that should be providing help, and those are the banks.

We all know that small businesses are collectively the largest employers in Ontario. They are the men and women with a dream, a product, a service, and the determination to get things done. But they are starving for capital. At a time when low interest rates can help them to expand, to take on additional staff, the banks have been cutting back on their credit lines and have been making it harder for small businesses to get loans.

Recent amendments to the Small Businesses Loans Act by the federal government have increased the willingness of at least one of the major banks to expand its funds available to small businesses, but more, much more, needs to be done. We all realize that banks are governed by federal regulations and there's a limit to provincial action in this matter; however, at the very least we can speak out and urge the banking industry to play their part in helping to get Ontario back to work by helping small businesses.

ONTARIO STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): In my previous responsibility as Liberal critic for Colleges and Universities, I tried valiantly to get clarification from the

ministry on how Ontario student assistance is distributed. Although the former minister did write me a lengthy letter last fall, my constituents are far from assured about the fairness of the system.

What they're concerned about is the apparent arbitrariness of the approval process. They have seen too many cases where seemingly well-off students receive OSAP, whereas others in less fortunate circumstances are refused. Surely it should be possible to publish a booklet that would detail the guidelines used by the ministry and give some easily understood examples of how all of this works. This is what I suggested to the minister, and the minister noted my advice with interest, but that was the extent of his action.

I call on the new Superminister of Education to do better. Ontarians have a right to judge for themselves whether or not they or their children qualify for OSAP support. At least, they should be able to get a reasonable explanation from the ministry why they were refused. It's simply not good enough for ministry officials to say, "We know best."

My constituents and I are still awaiting the publication of a well-prepared booklet that details the OSAP approval guidelines for the public.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): The month of June is dedicated to recognizing the significant contributions made by our senior citizens. It is also a time to pay tribute to those whose efforts on behalf of Ontario seniors have increased the quality of life for all seniors.

I should like to acknowledge my constituent Phyllis Hawkins, whose efforts to meet the varied needs of Burlington seniors earned her an Ontario Senior Achievement Award. Jane Leitch, the president of United Senior Citizens of Ontario, has advocated effectively on behalf of seniors. When faced with the NDP cutbacks to seniors' health care benefits, Jane has been in the forefront with her recommendations on how the government may save money through ways other than the unilateral cutting of seniors' programs. Certainly at no other time in Ontario's history have good advocates on behalf of seniors, like Jane, been needed more.

In Halton, a first-of-its-kind program was developed involving the Halton Regional Elderly Services Advisory Committee, the Halton Regional Police and the OPP, called Seniors and Law Enforcement Together. The SALT initiative takes aim at reducing elder abuse through partnership with seniors, police and the community.

Many seniors' seminars are also being held this month where seniors can learn about how best to deal with specific problems and how they may obtain

improved access to needed resources. I am pleased to say that my colleagues Jim Wilson, Bob Runciman, David Turnbull, Charles Harnick, Don Cousens, David Tilson, Chris Stockwell and others have joined with me in promoting such seminars in their ridings.

On behalf of Ontario's seniors, I urge the NDP government to reverse its trend of the cutting and delisting of seniors' services and benefits. During Seniors' Month, let's reflect on the fact that we have an obligation to value our seniors and that they should be able to live with the kind of dignity, respect and security that is their inalienable right.

ENVIRONMENT AWARDS

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): It is with great respect and pride that I rise in the Legislature today to congratulate a number of Canadian environmental groups that were recently honoured in Washington.

Members of the Legislature will likely be aware of the US-based Citizens' Clearing House for Hazardous Waste, headed by Lois Gibbs, the famous environmentalist who successfully fought the Love Canal 10 years ago. Her organization acts as a central organization for a tremendous number of environmental groups, local to international, to distribute and share important information and to communicate with each other in the whole area of the environment.

Recently in Washington, the Citizens' Clearing House honoured 14 Canadian environmental groups for their victories and constant efforts promoting a clean environment, protecting public health and safety and advancing the goal of environmental justice for all people. Ralph Nader, the well-known consumer advocate, and Lois Gibbs presented these Environmental Justice awards.

I am proud to announce that of the 14 Canadian awards distributed, 8 went to citizens in my own riding of Halton North. There is a strong environmental movement in my riding, and I believe the rare and natural beauty of the Niagara Escarpment in my riding has a major role in attracting many of those who dedicate their lives to defending the integrity of the environment.

A number of the groups and individuals honoured by Ralph Nader and Lois Gibbs were ICE, Incineration Counteracts the Environment; FOAD, Furiously Opposed to Acton Dumping; HELP, Halton Environmental Land Protectors; Envirowatch; Dr Leonard Landry; Diane Van de Valk; and Rita Landry.

I trust that all members of the Legislature will join with me in honouring these deserving groups and individuals dedicating their lives to protecting the environment.

1350

ANNUAL REPORT, INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER, 1992

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I beg to inform

the House that I have today laid upon the table the annual report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, Ontario, for the period covering January 1, 1992 to December 31, 1992.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'd like to refer you to page 24 of the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly, section 32(a), where it reads:

"A minister of the crown may make a short factual statement relating to government policy, ministry action or other similar matters of which the House should be informed.

"The time allotted to ministerial statements shall not exceed 20 minutes" etc.

Recent events caused me some concern and I would just like, as a part of this point of order, to refer back to comments by the honourable House leader in referring to ministers within the government who sit as ministers without portfolio. I would quote the Honourable Mr Charlton from the April 20, 1993, Hansard: "Ministers without portfolio have been specifically assigned responsibilities for which they have sole carriage."

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): Who is the real House leader? Will the real House leader stand up or sit down.

Mr Mahoney: Is the Treasurer having an apoplectic attack? What seems to be the problem?

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Mahoney: I know life is not easy for you these days.

The Speaker: Order. Will the member for Mississauga West address his point to the Chair.

Hon Mr Laughren: I am wondering who the House leader is these days.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, I'm being interrupted, as so often happens when I try to raise a valid point in this place.

Anyway, that is the point that I make on behalf of the honourable House leader, Mr Charlton. Then it goes on to quote the Premier on that same day in response to a question, where he says:

"So I want to say to the honourable member, the purpose of having larger ministries, of having ministers which in other governments are called ministers of state or associate ministers or ministers delegate, which they are in France or in Germany or in England or in any other place you want to look at, the determination was to have a cabinet which would be smaller, that is to say 20, but a ministry which would be made up of the ministers who are there.

"The ministers without portfolio who are working within ministries are working in association with the minister. They are taking"—and then there's an interjection. It so happens it was by me, where I say, "That's

one of the PA's jobs," and the Premier goes on to say:

"The member opposite shouts and says, 'That's a parliamentary assistant's job.' It is in part, but it is a position that carries with it, obviously, more experience and in which it is possible for that minister without portfolio to carry on a significant job for the government."

My point of order in reference to section 32(a), regarding the factual statement of the minister, would relate to the recent resignation by the junior minister of Health, the member for Perth, and the statement by the Premier that the minister, among other ministers without portfolio, is there to carry on a significant job for the government. My point of order is that we would like to know what the significant job was. We would like the government to tell us who in fact will be carrying out the member's significant job on behalf of the government. In relation to section 32(a)—

The Speaker: The member for Mississauga West will know that he does not have a point of order. However, it sounds as if he may have material for a question during oral questions, which comes along in a few minutes.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order with reference to sections 32(a) and (b) of the standing orders, which read:

"(a) A minister of the crown may make a short factual statement relating to government policy, ministry action or other similar matters of which the House should be informed.

"(b) The time allotted to ministerial statements shall not exceed 20 minutes without the unanimous consent of the House."

Mr Speaker, yesterday and in the six days immediately preceding that, a decision has been made by the government which affects every community in Ontario. The mediator, Dr Graeme McKechnie, has presented his report with respect to negotiations between the Ministry of Health and the Ontario Pharmacists' Association. His recommendations are precise and full and suggest that a joint committee—

The Speaker: Would the member take her seat, please.

Mrs Sullivan: Mr Speaker—

The Speaker: Would the member take her seat. I ask the member to take her seat.

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member will know she does not have a point of order. There is nothing out of order. Would the member please take her seat.

Mrs Sullivan: Mr Speaker, the ministry yesterday—

The Speaker: I ask the member to please take her seat. I must caution the member that if she remains out

of order, she will be named. The member does not have a point of order. She knows full well that ministers have the opportunity to make statements; there is no obligation on ministers to make statements.

Mrs Sullivan: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: My privileges have been breached because, as Health critic, I've had no information from the Minister of Health. The public's privileges have been breached because they have had no information from the Minister of Health about a singularly important aspect of government policy which is being unilaterally introduced, the mediator's report unilaterally dismissed, and at the same time—

The Speaker: Would the member for Halton Centre please take her seat. She will know that she does not have a point of privilege but, as with the member from Mississauga West, it sounds as if she has material for question period. It should be a lively question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My questions today will be to the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Finance for the province of Ontario.

The legislation that this government presented in this House yesterday may be the worst piece of legislation that any of us have ever seen. This government is so desperate to pull something out of the disaster of its social contract talks that it is now ready to impose arbitrary conditions on an absolutely unworkable process, and it achieves not one of the goals that the government itself set out to achieve.

I want to start with the fact that this legislation sets up the government to meet its budget target by deferring the bulk of the cost to some time in the future, some miracle year when supposedly there's going to be lots of money to pay the bills and this government won't be around to deal with the problem.

The legislation very specifically states that if employees are required to take special leave, in other words, unpaid leave instead of their normally paid holidays, the employer will grant an equal number of compensating days to these employees some time in the future. That means up to 36 days of paid leave will be owed to every employee affected.

I ask this Finance minister, in the name of fiscal responsibility, how can you possibly defer these kinds of costs to some time in the future? Have you looked at how many people will be affected by this special category? Will it be all teachers, all hospital workers, ambulance drivers, policemen, firemen? Have you even begun to look at the future cost impact of what you introduced yesterday?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): I appreciate the opportunity to clear up the misinformation put forth by the leader of the

official opposition.

The leader of the official opposition would recognize surely that simply the imposition of, for example, 12 mandatory days off in a given period of time in some essential services would not provide the flexibility of scheduling in those essential services only that the legislation recognizes and provides for. I think, just to put things in a bit of perspective, that the leader of the official opposition is trying to paint a picture in which this would apply to the entire public sector in the province. That's simply not the case. But we wanted to make sure that in cases of essential services—it might be jail guards or ambulance drivers—it would not be appropriate not to provide that kind of flexibility within the legislation so that scheduling could be done in an appropriate manner.

1400

Mrs McLeod: That, as the Treasurer well knows, is no answer to the serious question I asked. The question was, how much will it cost, who will it affect and how much will some future government have to pay for this government's sheer stupidity? This is nothing more, this particular clause, than a feeble attempt at appeasement. It is one of a great number of tortured ways the government has used in this bill to avoid calling a spade a spade.

Let me give you another one. This is a wage rollback bill. It is a temporary three-year wage rollback, but it is a wage rollback. You disallow negotiated wage increases. You require people to take unpaid leave if that's necessary to meet your budget targets. That, by any other name, is a wage rollback. I ask why you refuse to acknowledge that you are indeed rolling back wages. Why do you keep pretending this is a wage freeze? You know; you've said it yourself; the Premier said it: A wage freeze is not enough to get you the dollars you need. If you're going to bite the bullet, why don't you bite it and stop trying to avoid it by simply deferring horrendous costs to some time in the future?

Hon Mr Laughren: I'm not sure what the leader of the official opposition means when she says that this is an attempt to appease. Appease whom? I don't know what she's talking about. As far as the language is concerned, what we said from day one was that there must be roughly a 5% reduction in public sector compensation. That's not using avoidance words. That's not pretending it's anything other than that. What we said was that we wanted to achieve expenditure reductions of \$4 billion, public sector compensation reductions of \$2 billion, and then there was going to be a tax package in the neighbourhood of \$2 billion.

If the leader of the official opposition is saying, "You must not do that to the public sector, what you must do is increase taxes by more than \$2 billion or reduce expenditures by more than \$2 billion," why won't she

bite the bullet and say what she really means?

Mrs McLeod: It is smoke and mirrors, and less than being directly up front with people, to try and lull them into believing that simply a wage freeze is enough to achieve your budget targets when you know very well that is not the case. I would say that this bill puts forward other tortured proposals to try and create another illusion, and that's the illusion that you're giving people job security as a tradeoff. No one really believes that this is job security when you put in place a job security fund for laid-off workers.

But what is even more frightening is what you have previously proposed for the redeployment of workers, what you refer to in your legislation simply as something called "sector redeployment," which is going to be further defined, we assume, by regulation in the secretive way this government chooses to operate.

In the appendix to your last offer, and this is why we're concerned, the government said that employees who are being supported by the job security fund must accept a job for which they are qualified—in another piece of legislation this would be called deeming—and employees furthermore will be eligible for similar and related employment within a reasonable geographic area both within and between sectors.

I say to you that this would be a nightmare. I want your assurance that you will not, through a regulatory process which we never see, put this kind of a nightmare into place.

Hon Mr Laughren: Once again, I think the leader of the official opposition is reading something into this legislation that's not there.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Firstly, we don't trust you, Floyd.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I'm not asking you to trust me. I'm just saying to the leader of the official opposition that I believe a job security fund and redeployment among sectors is to the benefit of people in the public sector. That's why I think it's terribly important that there be sectoral funds, sectoral agreements, so there will be an understanding that if an employee is laid off in one institution, for example, there will be an opportunity for that person to be employed in another institution, because some institutions will be expanding, some will be contracting and so forth.

I think, to be fair, the redeployment language which was at the social contract table, I might add, as well, is something that is of potentially enormous benefit to employees in this province and, quite frankly, important in the restructuring of government all across Ontario.

The Speaker: New question.

Mrs McLeod: I say to the minister that I only hope people listen very carefully to what he just said because it is absolutely, completely unworkable. I am even more

alarmed than I was before I asked the question that this is exactly the direction this government is going to take. If this government set out to create the most cumbersome, unworkable, irresponsible legislation it could possibly devise, it has certainly been successful in that one respect, at least.

Last week, the Premier said, "Comprehensive solutions will not work." He said he had heard that message from both employers and employees. He heard it eight weeks too late, but at least he finally heard it. We thought that the legislation you were bringing in yesterday would finally open up local negotiations to achieve the financial targets that you put in place. Instead of that, we have an unbelievable process that is not even going to be able to get off the ground. Let me just describe it.

You have put in place the process of sectoral negotiations that have to lead to agreements, that meet government's conditions and then get the minister's approval, we assume yours, although that's not even specified. Then you have to have local negotiations to reach 9,000 local agreements that fit with the sectoral agreement. Then there is an appeal and a sort of arbitration process if employees feel they have not been dealt with fairly, and all of this has to be done by perhaps August 10 at the very latest.

I ask you in all seriousness, do you really believe this can work? Has anybody over there ever negotiated a collective agreement?

Hon Mr Laughren: I would say to the leader of the official opposition that any number of my colleagues on this side have individually negotiated more contracts than every member on that side combined, I suspect. Lots of our members have done that.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: It doesn't take much to tease the bears today, Mr Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: Gee whiz. I would say to the leader of the official opposition that the legislation does indeed allow for individual agreements at the local level. It encourages sectoral agreements, because we think that in the long run that's much better and allows for redeployment to take place across the sector and so forth. If anything, this legislation both encourages and provides an incentive for agreements at the local level and for sectoral agreements as well.

It seems to me that's a responsible way in which to encourage people to reach an agreement. At the same time, we recognize the fact that this may not happen, just as it didn't happen at the social contract table, and because of that we need legislation that says that if this is not achieved by August 1, then the legislation takes

effect. I think that's the most fair and reasonable way in which to proceed.

1410

Mrs McLeod: I actually did make an assumption that there were some people over there who had some idea of what it takes to reach an agreement. That's why we cannot understand how you could put this absolute insanity into legislation. The fact is that I just don't think there are any longer any really constructive or workable ways to get us out of the absolute mess that this government has created.

We supported your need to find \$2 billion in cost reductions in public sector compensation. We said, "Set your financial targets, negotiate with your employees to achieve those targets, and give other employers and employees the tools that they need to achieve the goals you set." Instead of that, we have had eight wasted weeks of a social contract circus and the situation now is made even worse, which I hardly thought was possible.

Why did you have no faith that people could actually find better ways to meet the financial bottom lines that you put in place? Why did you not give local negotiations a chance to work?

Hon Mr Laughren: Now let me get this straight. I want to be perfectly clear. I don't want to misrepresent her position, because I think I've found one. The leader of the official opposition says that she and her colleagues support—I presume this means the entire Liberal caucus, including the House leader—the target of \$2 billion, support the target of achieving that \$2 billion in public sector compensation, support our attempts to get it through the negotiating process. I think that's what I heard her say.

Mrs McLeod: No, a basic difference: not your attempts; they're disasters.

Hon Mr Laughren: Oh, so now wait a minute. Now she's not supporting the attempt to get it through negotiations. So presumably she has now bought into the Mike Harris bang, bang, bang way of achieving the reduction targets.

I want to tell the leader of the official opposition that while the social contract table didn't work, I will never regret for one moment our attempt, a serious attempt, to achieve the reductions through collective bargaining, because I think that was worth the effort even though it failed, and we feel so strongly about it that we're willing to give it another six weeks, till the end of July. I don't see why that's such a ridiculous proposal. Perhaps you don't have the faith in the exercise that we do, and I don't expect you to have, but if we're able to achieve an agreement worked out by employees and employers, then I think that's the best solution.

Mrs McLeod: It is exactly because I had faith that

people could work out better solutions than can be imposed by this government on 9,000 collective agreements that I said in April, before you ever devised this social contract nonsense, that this government had two responsibilities. The first was to bring in a realistic and responsible budget that would set financial targets, and the other was to negotiate with its own employees for whom it was responsible to negotiate. You never even began to put in place a process like that which had a hope of working from the beginning. That is why I am just so totally frustrated today that after all the time and all the anguish, we are actually now, in June, in mid-June, further behind than we were eight weeks ago.

I just say to you, Minister, that these are critical times, that people are frustrated and anxious, that we desperately need strong leadership in this province, that we needed strong leadership last fall when you knew your budget was in trouble and did nothing about it, and we needed strong leadership even more when finally you convinced somebody that you had to deal with your deficit problem. We still need it, and I wonder when we are going to get leadership that deals with reality. When are we going to get some leadership that works?

Hon Mr Laughren: I gather rhetorical questions are in order today. That's certainly what that was.

I would say to the leader of the official opposition that we did bring in a budget that set targets. We did that. We did set up a negotiating process with our employees. That's what you're now saying we should have done, and we did it. We did it for about eight weeks. The fact that it didn't work surely is a separate argument. Negotiations don't always come to a successful conclusion. I hope you appreciate that.

The leader of the official opposition is saying she doesn't like what we did and what we're doing, but she hasn't told me what it is that she would have done. I suspect that if the leader of the official opposition were standing over here now, she'd do what they did between 1985 and 1990: raise taxes, spend more money, layer program on top of program on top of program.

For the first time, there's a government in this province that recognizes the problem and is dealing with it head-on and is not running away from a difficult problem. We're dealing with it.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): My question is for the Minister of Finance. For the past eight years, you and the Liberals have increased the size and the scope of government to the point now where we just can't afford it any more. The costs are out of sight; the size is beyond our ability to pay for it. Finally, it's become so obvious even to you that you've had to do something about it, and we see the social contract legislation.

The problem is that you've still missed the point. My leader has made it very clear that he and our party will

amend your legislation, because it is not about downsizing government, it's about downsizing Bob Rae's political baggage, if anything. So I ask you a very simple and straightforward question: Why is there nothing in your legislation to encourage your transfer partners to downsize? Why is there nothing in this legislation to act as an incentive to limiting the size and scope of government?

Hon Mr Laughren: The purpose of the legislation is to reduce compensation in the public sector, and as part of the whole process—I think the member for Markham would understand this—we are encouraging early retirement, voluntary exits. As to the broader public service out there, the reduced expenditures have already taken place, in one sense, in our expenditure reduction program, which was \$4 billion worth of downsizing out there, if you will, and now we are taking \$2 billion more out of public sector compensation.

I know the Conservative opposition would opt for a much tougher position on slashing programs and jobs in the public sector. I understand that. His leader's been very clear on that. What I think we've done is to take a very responsible position by raising some taxes, by reducing expenditures and by reducing public sector compensation. I think that's a much more reasonable solution and it protects jobs and services out there all across the province.

I can tell the member opposite that if he thinks he can simply wave a wand and reduce expenditures without affecting the services that people out there want, he's sadly mistaken.

Mr Cousens: The last thing we need is to have you telling the Conservatives what our policies are. We've had enough difficulty getting you to come to the realization that you've got a problem. You've finally realized it, but for you to come along and say that we have policies to axe and tax the way you are doing, you're absolutely wrong. Our policies don't begin to do the long-term damage you're talking about, but you have not begun to address the long-term solutions. What you've got is a short-term fix to a long-term structural problem.

1420

At the end of three years, the government will be the same size, if not bigger, than today. In 1996, employees who have taken a wage freeze for three years will be asking for large increases to make up for the freeze, and for those employees who banked their vacation time because of enforced unpaid time off, government may have to make massive payouts or be saddled with unmanageable amounts of time off.

Can you tell those of us who come to clean up the mess three years from now just how much your short-term fix will cost Ontario in the long run?

Hon Mr Laughren: The exact opposite is the case. What we've done on the expenditure reduction side is to take out \$4 billion in expenditures. That becomes annualized every year, in the form of reduced expenditures every single year. On the public compensation side, the \$2 billion in expenditure reductions is not a one-year program; it's not a deferral of public sector compensation. To answer the member directly, this is a long-term solution to expenditures in the province and to public sector compensation so that we can put the financial house of Ontario back in order for the first time in a long time.

Mr Cousens: I don't think you're reading the same legislation that we are, because what you're saying is 12 days off this year, 12 off the next year, 12 off then, and then what happens? They're all going to be wanting their time off and they're back into the whole long-term problem again.

Structurally, you have not begun to deal with the long-term problem. What you're doing is short-term, it's panic-driven, it's nothing more than a fix to '96. You're grasping for anything to help meet your targets, regardless of the long-term effects.

The Premier himself has said that the wage and price controls imposed by Pierre Trudeau in the 1970s led to a catching up by the unions in the 1980s. That's what ultimately was destructive to the economy, and it forced prices up.

I ask you again, how can your plan work? It's so full of short-term approaches rather than a long-term structural reform of the government.

Hon Mr Laughren: His own leader, rather than taking a long-term, responsible, reasonable approach to the problem said: "Go get 'em. Bang, bang, bang." You tell me that's responsible and a thoughtful way of downsizing the public sector in this province? Absolutely not.

I can tell the member opposite, if his colleague behind him will stop frothing at the mouth, that what we've done is to downsize the public sector, reduce compensation in the public sector, and if you'll read the legislation, you will understand. I think you're making the same mistake the leader of the official opposition did: that the deferrals to which you refer deal only with difficult situations with essential public services, not for the public sector at large.

TRANSPORTATION OF WASTE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a question for the Minister of Environment and Energy. You're the minister who's responsible for overseeing the three superdumps in the greater Toronto area. I will tell you that the Interim Waste Authority has recently asked Canadian Pacific and Canadian National railways to provide quotes on the construction of necessary rail infrastructure to ship waste to each of the sites ident-

ified as the potential landfill sites in the greater Toronto area regions.

Are you aware of this request by the Interim Waste Authority, and do you support it?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The answer to the first question is yes; the answer to the second one is, I'll wait to see what the results might be.

Mr Tilson: As you're no doubt aware, the Canadian National Railway has been working with other interests to have Metro's waste shipped to the abandoned Adams mine site outside Kirkland Lake. This system is already in place, the rail line is already in place, the infrastructure is already there.

Obviously, the recent proposal by the Interim Waste Authority to consider shipping waste by rail from Toronto to Georgina will require major investments and construction at a time when this province can't afford them. We have your Treasurer on the one hand saying you're going to cut civil servants, and on the other hand you're saying you're going to build a new railway.

The IWA has already spent some \$30 million, as of the end of April, on a questionable process. How can you possibly justify spending more money on new railway lines when you already have a complete system in northern Ontario?

Hon Mr Wildman: I don't justify it; it wasn't my idea. Any suggestion that will be considered will have to be considered by the IWA very seriously before coming to any conclusions as it might relate to any particular site that might be chosen, and then if it is part of a proposal that is decided upon by the IWA through its thorough process, it will be subject to the environmental assessment process. All of those processes will determine whether or not they are economically, environmentally and socially acceptable.

Mr Tilson: You know, the difficulty is that you say you didn't. Of course, your government was the government that created Bill 143, and that was the start of this whole process which simply is looking at the super-dumps in the greater Toronto area and not looking at anything else, notwithstanding that there's an area that's prepared to consider the long rail haul.

Your essential assumption behind Bill 143 was that communities will not initiate the 3R activities with a distant landfill site, if it's located beyond its immediate region. That was your essential assumption. The record of the city of Seattle, as I'm sure you are aware, totally destroys your theory. This city has one of the most progressive waste reduction programs in North America. While the target you announced several weeks ago was 50% diversion by the year 2000, Seattle has achieved 60%, yet all of this is being accomplished while it's sending its waste to a site 325 miles away from the city.

The system is now in place to consider sending waste

by rail to Kirkland Lake—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Tilson: I'm asking the question, Mr Speaker. Why will you not allow this to be compared to sites selected in the greater Toronto area? Why will you not allow the site in Kirkland Lake to be considered by the Interim Waste Authority?

Hon Mr Wildman: The member is fully aware that I've stated and the government has stated clearly that if a proponent wishes to initiate an environmental assessment on any proposal with regard to any site, whether it be rail haul or otherwise, they are welcome to do it.

RACE RELATIONS

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): My question is to the Deputy Premier. The Deputy Premier should be aware of the increased activities of hate groups across the province. We've seen a recent spate of violent, racially motivated criminal attacks, which has heightened the concern in all segments of our society. The people of this province want to know what specific plan is in place to deal with increased racial tensions and to protect those innocent citizens who have been victimized by these hate groups.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier): The Attorney General is not here today, nor is the Minister of Citizenship—

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): We know that.

Hon Mr Laughren: If you'll let me finish. One reason they are not here is that they are at the anti-racism round table, which for the first time is allowing people to have direct access to political decision-makers in this province. I think that's an important initiative, and those are the kinds of issues they'll be dealing with at the round table.

I agree with the member for Scarborough North that there are no more important issues than the ones he is raising in this regard, and I'm hoping that some of the advice that will come forward from the round table will be helpful.

Mr Curling: I have no doubt at all about the sincerity of the Deputy Premier and the apologies for all these ministers not here, but all they do is talk the talk and never walk the walk. We have more discussions going on and groups getting together to find out what we should do. These groups want to know, what action are you taking, Deputy Premier?

Three groups had press conferences today: the B'Nai Brith, the Human Rights Commission and the Urban Alliance on Race Relations. They're appealing to you, appealing to this government to live up to some of the promises—not the talk, not the rhetoric, not the apologies that they are not here, around a round table, because it doesn't solve racial problems in this province.

These groups suggested that this government has not committed enough resources to deal with hate literature and hate groups. Furthermore, they are calling for amendments to the Human Rights Code that would facilitate the commission's ability to deal with hate literature and hate groups. They were promised some time ago that you would have dealt with this issue. When are you going to act and stop talking?

1430

Hon Mr Laughren: Normally the member for Scarborough North is very fair in his comments, but I really think he's being unfair in this regard.

One of the signals that has come to us from the individuals most affected by racism or hate literature has been that they want to be part of the decision-making process. They want to have input into the way in which we should address these very serious problems.

I'm not sure whether or not I heard the member for Scarborough North saying that he didn't approve of the anti-racism round table process, because I think he's wrong: People all across the province who are most affected by racist tactics are the very ones who are endorsing the whole idea of a round table. All wisdom does not reside in government, and I think it's a very good process to have direct input from people who are most affected by the problems to which the member refers, and I know the Attorney General is herself dealing directly with these problems at the round table. So I hope that the member for Scarborough North will allow us that, that at least we're trying to do something about it and we're meeting directly with people who are most affected by it.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Etobicoke West.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Thank you, Mr Stock—that's me—Mr Speaker.

My question is to the Finance minister. This piece of legislation, apparently your piece of legislation, has been pretty much universally condemned as being chaotic and incomplete. The unions don't like it; your alleged partners don't like it; there appears to be diminishing support within your own caucus, as every day we hear of a new member who's gone astray.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): Every day?

Mr Stockwell: Well, every day: It's only been out for a couple and you've lost two, so I can only say "every day."

In a matter of seven months you're asking municipalities to compress cost-cuttings for a full year. For 5% wage rollbacks it means they're going to have to look at an 8% to 10% wage rollback. For one person laid off they're going to have to look at two people laid off.

Your partners have said that this is going to cause a chaotic situation in the municipal sector, in education, in the hospitals. We're not talking about not cutting a lawn one day, we're talking about not doing open-heart surgery.

Can you not understand the chaotic mess that you're going to create if you continue down this single-minded, error-prone road? Would you please contact your partners and meet with them and decide exactly how much of an impact this is going to make on them and possibly rethink the position of this government?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I knew that when the leader of the third party was absent today the member for Etobicoke West would have a chance to ask a question, and I welcome him.

It's the first time I've seen the Tory opposition in this House question the need for expenditure reductions, so I'm not sure what the member for Etobicoke West is saying. On one specific point he raised, however, such as the municipalities attempting to achieve reductions in the balance of the fiscal year, I indicated yesterday, and certainly the municipalities know this, that while there's only from now till the end of December for the calendar year, there is from now until the end of next March for our fiscal year, and that is the year in which the savings must be achieved, not necessarily in the fiscal year of the municipalities or our other social partners out there. I disagree with the member for Etobicoke West that there's only a half a year left in the fiscal year in which to achieve these savings. There is most of this fiscal year to achieve the savings.

Mr Stockwell: Mr Minister, we're not opposed to cost reductions. We've never suggested we're opposed. You see, the difference between this party and yours is, we're in favour of planned, reasonable, acceptable cost reductions that the partners understand and the community accepts. That's the difference. What you have done is create a complete and utter mess, an incompetent piece of legislation, and suggesting that we're not in favour of reductions compounds your problem, because you have no friends left. You may as well cultivate the few you potentially have.

I say to the minister, we are not opposed to the processes. We understand that if they're going to get these cuts in place, the best they'll do is September 1. We know an August 1 deadline can't be implemented till September 1. Take your fiscal year, and there are only seven months left. Now, be straight with the people. Be upfront. If you're going to make cuts in seven but you insist on a full year, if you still have this disbelief you're going to get your \$2 billion, then tell your partners outright that for every job they lay off there are going to be two; for every 5% rollback—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Stockwell: —it's going to be 10%; for every pay pause day it's going to be two; and three years out, whoever sits on that side of the House is going to be faced with a huge, huge bill from your short-term fix for '96.

The Speaker: Would the member place a question.

Mr Stockwell: Be frank and upfront, Minister. You can't possibly tell me you can save 12 months' worth of saving in seven and not have a chaotic—

The Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Mr Stockwell: —painful mess out there.

Hon Mr Laughren: I'll pretend I heard a question in that rant. First of all, it's reassuring to hear the Tory party call for central planning in the province of Ontario. The next thing they'll be calling for are five-year plans.

The member for Etobicoke West, my friend, should understand that the reductions to our transfer partners out there don't start in October or September or August; they start on July 1, and the fiscal year ends next March 31. That's not five months or seven months; that's almost the entire fiscal year. So I wish the member for Etobicoke West would stop trying to frighten people out there—

Mr Stockwell: When's the deal?

Hon Mr Laughren: The member for Etobicoke West, all I'd ask him to do is sit down and think about it. July 1 to next March 31 is the length of time during which the savings must be achieved.

HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Mr David Winninger (London South): My question is for the Minister of Health regarding the right of psychologists to admit patients to Ontario's hospitals. As you are aware, psychologists have provided services in hospitals for 75 years and have been a regulated profession for 40 years. They have a high level of training and education and play a unique and vital role in our hospital system in promoting wellness.

Under the Regulated Health Professions Act, psychologists have the right to diagnose and treat mental disorders, yet psychologists do not have the right to admit patients to hospitals, even though studies show psychological intervention reduces costs through a decreased length of hospitalization. In cases where a psychologist has an acutely suicidal patient, that psychologist will have no right to admit a patient to a hospital.

I would ask you whether you are considering implementing a necessary change to allow psychologists the right to admit their patients to hospitals and when psychologists can expect your decision.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I've had an opportunity to meet with representatives of the profession and I understand the vital role that psychologists

play in the hospital system. I have to say in response to the member's question that the decision about hospital privileges for the professions, particularly those under the Regulated Health Professions Act, is going to be part of the ongoing review of the Public Hospitals Act.

As the member is aware, there has been some consultation around some changes to the Public Hospitals Act. We are currently reviewing feedback from those public hearings, which were held across the province last summer. I must also say to him that the matter of practice privileges is a broader issue than just hospital privileges and requires more study of both policy and legislative implications.

1440

Mr Winninger: Do you have at this time a definite time line for consideration of the recommendations being made on the basis of your public consultation and, in the meantime, what are we to tell the psychologists with regard to their consumer-based desire to gain the admitting right for their patients?

Hon Mrs Grier: I'm afraid I can't at this point give the member a definite time line. As I said, there has been consultation around the Public Hospitals Act. We are currently reviewing that, and I would certainly hope that before the end of this year we might have some amendments in the House. But it is a broad issue and an issue that will require some considerable consultation both with this profession and with other professions before we come to a definitive conclusion.

OZONE-DEPLETING SUBSTANCES

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I have a question to the Minister of Environment and Energy. Last month you released a regulation ostensibly to deal with substances that critically damage the ozone layer and threaten human health as a result. Your regulation includes hydrofluorocarbons, which have absolutely no ozone-depleting potential—in other words, they pose no threat to the ozone layer—but excludes halons, which are used in fire extinguishers and which constitute as much as 40% of ozone-depleting substances.

Why have you chosen to ignore a major source of ozone-layer destruction and include instead one that poses absolutely no threat at all?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I thank the member for his question. He will know that when I made the announcement I made it clear why we were including what we did, beyond CFCs themselves. He'll also know that I announced that we will be dealing with halons this fall, and we will have a regulation to deal with the spray elements and the uses in things like fire extinguishers and so on this fall, so that by the end of the year we will have a regulation that will cover 100% of the ozone-depleting substances.

Mr Offer: There's no question that the regulation that has been introduced by the minister involves a

substance which has no ozone-layer depletion effect whatsoever and excludes one that does.

Parents are concerned about the amount of sunlight they and their children receive. There is widespread concern about direct sunlight. Children do not go out of doors now without hats, without sunblock. This past weekend the ultraviolet radiation levels were as high as 8.4 on the UV scale.

When can the people of Ontario expect your government to take concrete action in protecting their health and their environment through regulating all sources of ozone-depleting substances in the province and excluding those substances which have no impact on the ozone layer whatsoever?

Hon Mr Wildman: I can only conclude from that question that the member didn't listen to my first answer. I told him that we would have regulations dealing with halons this fall, so that by the end of the year we will have 100% of ozone-depleting substances covered by the regulation.

We all share the concern about UV exposure in sunlight, and the concern is shared by all members of the House and all who are concerned about the environment. That is why we are moving so quickly to have such a comprehensive regulation that will be the leading regulation of all jurisdictions in North America, and I welcome the member's support for our efforts.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): My question is to the Minister of Finance. The municipalities are still totally confused by your announcements on the social contract, but I must say they are still trying to help with your deficit. You have said to freeze wages. Most municipalities have already frozen wages. You have said to have the employees take a day off without pay.

There will be no negotiated agreements before July 1. There will be no negotiated agreements before August 1. As a matter of fact, before it gets implemented, practically it could well be September 1. That will leave the municipalities with either seven or eight months by the end of March that you've indicated as their deadline. There won't be enough months to make the savings. There will have to be layoffs.

What the municipalities would like to know is how much do you expect from the municipalities, how much of a cut will they have to take, not only by the end of your fiscal year, but they need to plan on their fiscal year. Will you tell them how much will they have to cut by the end of their fiscal year, which will probably be about three or four months after this has been legislated, December 31, 1993?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): To the member for Don Mills, I think it's a fair question. Each municipality will receive, probably tomorrow—the letters have been approved already—from the Minister

of Municipal Affairs a letter which provides to it its reduction target, not only its own but everyone else's as well, every other municipality's as well, because I think it's appropriate that they see the whole picture of other municipalities. It has been indicated to them that the transfer reductions will take place and that they will be encouraged to work out whatever system they can.

I don't know, quite frankly, whether or not there is going to be a sectoral agreement in the municipal sector. I can't answer that question. But I do believe that through a combination of the freeze which will be dropped into place, if it's done voluntarily or through the legislation, along with numbers of days off, it should look after the bulk of the problem. I have never said, nor would I say now, that I don't think there may be some layoffs associated with this exercise; that is, it is conceivable that there will have to be some.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Laughren: It is my hope that will be minimized.

Mr David Johnson: In your response you continue to put a great deal of emphasis on the days off, the pause days, although the municipalities, in my estimation, will have only seven or eight months to implement that policy. The problem is that municipalities have different areas of jurisdiction. For example, in day care and homes for the aged there are legislated staff complements. They cannot have people take pause days. They must have staff in place.

There are essential services—the police. I understand from your previous response that these are not all of the public servants across the province of Ontario, but we are talking about thousands and thousands of people in legislated areas. In essential services there are 6,000 police officers in Metropolitan Toronto alone, 72,000 pause days, about \$14 million a year worth of pause days.

The Speaker: Would the member place a question.

Mr David Johnson: What do you expect the municipalities to do in those situations? Do you expect them to bank those days for three years? What is the cost? What sort of cost have you estimated that the taxpayer will have to pick up after three years, the burden on the taxpayer at the end of the social contract?

Hon Mr Laughren: There's no question whatsoever that as we go about this exercise of downsizing government and of reducing expenditures in the public sector through compensation, days off and so forth, it's going to be felt at the local level in the delivery of services. There's absolutely no question about that. People must understand that when they call for lower expenditures, cuts in government, that's what it translates into at the end of the day. There is no avoidance of that. There is no easy way out of that.

All I would say to the member for Don Mills is that it's going to require employees and, in this case, municipal employers to sit down and work these things out in the most creative way possible. If the member is asking me what's going to happen in 1996, I think at that point there already will have been a freeze, presumably for three years.

At that point the days off to achieve the overall public sector reduction targets will have been achieved and municipal governments, as the provincial government, I hope, at that point will have gone through a restructuring exercise that will allow them to deliver their services in a more cost-efficient and effective way.

1450

LANDFILL

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): My question is for the Minister of Environment and Energy. As you may be aware or not aware, on Saturday, June 5, several hundred Georgina residents came to Toronto. They walked from Nathan Phillips Square to Queen's Park to a rally.

The community is united behind an environmental group called GAG, Georgina Against Garbage. They held the rally here in Toronto to make the people of this city aware of the garbage crisis. They have very many concerns, and so do I, about the Interim Waste Authority process, the potential damage to the local community up there and to Lake Simcoe.

If you were to drive down Woodbine Avenue—and I invite you to take the trip some time—you'd see many signs along the side of the road. In fact there's one every 20 seconds as you drive which shows how many trucks will be going down it.

My question is, will the IWA take a look in consideration of the huge potential negative impact the truck traffic will have on the local environment as well as the wellbeing of Lake Simcoe?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The answer is yes.

Mr O'Connor: When you take into consideration the distance between downtown Toronto and that remote community that I represent up in Georgina, it's a huge distance. What I want to know is, will the IWA take seriously in the selection criteria, the process, this whole distance, because it's a huge distance?

Hon Mr Wildman: I appreciate the comments from my colleague. I know of his concern as well as his constituents' and I appreciate the fact that he has raised this matter so vociferously on behalf of the communities in his riding, particularly Georgina, over the last number of months.

Obviously the IWA, in choosing sites, will have to take into account questions of transportation. We had an earlier question during question period on this today. The decisions with regard to truck traffic, which are

very important to the people of the area, as well as the quality of Lake Simcoe, will be central to deciding how a site should be selected. The IWA will take those matters into account in choosing a site.

Then again, whatever site is chosen, as I've said so many times in this House, will be subject to a full environmental assessment, and questions of transportation, truck traffic, dust, noise, effects on the local communities and environmental effects on water quality will be matters which will be central to any environmental assessment.

POLITICAL ADVERTISING

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): My question is to the Chair of Management Board. A few days ago I asked the Premier a question about wasteful advertising expenditures to advertise the budget. The Premier admitted that you are wasting over \$300,000 of taxpayers' money on NDP propaganda in several major newspapers.

Today I have yet another example of wasteful expenditure and wasteful spending habits. It seems that you have distributed yet another piece of advertising on the budget which proudly advertises a 1-800 number that people can call for answers about your budget. When people call this number, they're simply referred to the federal government. How can you justify a 1-800 number, costing the taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars, that simply refers them to the federal government?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I'm not aware of the 1-800 number the member refers to, but the publication she's holding up is not a government publication. It is in fact a caucus publication.

Mrs Caplan: The number advertised in this piece of advertising is the budget hotline number. When a constituent called that number to ask about provincial income tax increases in your budget, to her utter amazement she was referred to the federal Department of Revenue. She was just told, "Call Revenue Canada," and she was shocked.

You have provided, at taxpayers' expense, a 1-800 number designed to answer questions about your budget, yet when people call, they are simply referred to Revenue Canada. I say to you today—you're always asking for good ideas—why don't you simply scrap this number and in your self-serving advertising put the number to the federal government directly? Why have a 1-800 number that simply refers people to Revenue Canada? Will you scrap this 1-800 number and simply advertise the Revenue Canada number and save the taxpayers of Ontario hundreds of thousands of dollars of waste?

Hon Mr Charlton: I think I could deal with a number of the issues the member has raised here. I want

to start out by making it very clear—because the member implied in both her original question and her supplementary that we had wasted government money on the publication in question—it is not a government publication.

Secondly, I'm not familiar with the specific number the member is referring to. She obviously says it's a Ministry of Finance number. I'm prepared to look into that matter. I would assume it is a number that deals with questions associated with the budget and specific tax matters in the budget. However, the member will know that any publication put out that's intended to provide people with information sometimes has to provide people with information from other levels of government as well as this one.

PETITIONS

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): Yesterday I had the opportunity to present a number of petitions from the Sir James Whitney School in Belleville, being from students, parents, teachers and members of the union at that school. Again I would like to present this petition today which consists of in the range of about 1,500 people who have signed it. It reads:

"To the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Education proposes to substantially modify the provincial schools for the deaf and learning-disabled by either downsizing, closing parts of or restructuring the schools, resulting in significant hardship for students, families, employees and the local community, for the purpose of saving money; and

"Whereas the Sir James Whitney Parents' Association believe that quality education delivered today within the current provincial schools for the deaf and learning-disabled provides the lowest total-cost option available while allowing deaf students to wholly develop within their own culture and to receive the best education possible,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"(1) Maintain the current provincial schools for the deaf and learning-disabled until an acceptable model from all interested parties has been developed; and

"(2) Empower local boards of trustees, as set out in model 5, to manage their own budgets within ministry guidelines and funding."

I have affixed my signature to this petition.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition that's signed by some 400 people from my part of Simcoe county. It reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the Toronto Board of Education is already

endangering the health of children, discriminating against heterosexuals by distributing the dangerous and heterophobic sexual orientation guide as well as the so-called AIDS education flyers which condone and recommend buggery and teaching that anal sex with a condom is safe; and

"Whereas the Education Act guarantees the right to withdraw from instruction that is in conflict with the religious belief held by a student, guardian or parent,

"We demand that the Ministry of Education immediately prohibit any instruction in the school system that offends against the Criminal Code or conflicts with the personal values and beliefs of most people, including the teaching of homosexuality, any homosexual counselling and any homosexual hotline service in the schools or promoted by the schools and the distribution by any person of so-called AIDS education flyers."

This is signed by some 400 people from Collingwood, Stayner and throughout my Simcoe West riding, and I too have affixed my name to this petition.

1500

GAMBLING

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): I'm presenting a petition that contains the signatures of 26 constituents from the St Catharines-Niagara area, and it relates to casinos. The "Be it resolved" reads:

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I have affixed my signature to the petition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I have affixed my signature to this petition.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and

Grenville, members of Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 440, employed at the Brockville Jail, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it, and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I have affixed my signature in support.

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I have a petition that adds some more signatures to the thousands that we have presented against casino gambling in the province of Ontario:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I am very glad to affix my signature against this terrible bill.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Mr Speaker, as you are no doubt aware, members of the executive branch cannot read petitions into the Legislature, so I have been asked by Frances Lankin, the member from Beaches-Woodbine, to enter this petition on behalf of her constituents:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and

economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

That read on behalf of Frances Lankin, Beaches-Woodbine.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I'm pleased to present a petition signed by several of the good parishioners of Trinity St Andrew's United Church in Renfrew, which petition begs the government of Ontario to cease all moves with respect to establishing gambling casinos in the province of Ontario.

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1923, seven Ontario bands signed the Williams Treaty, which guaranteed that native peoples would fish and hunt according to provincial and federal conservation laws like everyone else; and

"Whereas the bands were paid the 1993 equivalent of \$20 million; and

"Whereas that treaty was upheld by Ontario's highest court last year; and

"Whereas Bob Rae is not enforcing existing laws which prohibit native peoples from hunting and fishing out of season; and

"Whereas this will put at risk an already pressured part of Ontario's natural environment;

"We, the undersigned, adamantly demand that the government honour the principles of fish and wildlife conservation, to respect our native and non-native ancestors and to respect the Williams Treaty."

That has 200 signatures on it, from Chapleau to Bobcaygeon to Picton, all over Ontario, and I've signed it.

TAXICABS

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I too have a petition addressed to the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and it reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, Metropolitan Toronto electors,

being persons involved in the taxi industry, hereby petition the Lieutenant Governor to investigate or cause an investigation into the activities and the relationship between the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, Metro council, its legislation and licensing committee of Metro council and the Metropolitan Licensing Commission."

There are about 100 signatures, and it's the second of two that I'm introducing.

GAMBLING

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): I also have a petition, from a number of residents in the Erin Mills community of Mississauga West which reads:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

CLOSURE OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): To the Lieutenant Governor of the province of Ontario and to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the NDP government has decided to discontinue funding education programs at the New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to seriously consider reversing your decision to close the New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology."

This is a matter of great concern in my riding and it's signed by some 222 concerned constituents in my riding. I have affixed my signature thereto.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): I have a petition here from 63 residents of the city of Niagara Falls asking that Bill 164 be withdrawn.

CLOSURE OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have

a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food has decided to close Centralia College of Agricultural Technology and the veterinary services diagnostic laboratory at the college as of May 1, 1994,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To reverse the decision to close the Centralia College of Agricultural Technology and the veterinary services laboratory diagnostic lab located at Centralia's campus."

I have signed the petition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I have a petition from the constituents of Etobicoke West and surroundings, as well as the constituents from Etobicoke-Rexdale and Etobicoke-Lakeshore.

Mr Mahoney: What about Etobicoke Centre?

Mr Stockwell: No, it's federal, but Mississauga centre. The petition is to the Legislative Assembly and Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship"—due to this government—"high unemployment"—due to this government—"and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases"—specifically due to this government, I might add parenthetically, as my friend from Scarborough does—"and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums,"—and that's not debatable—"for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows,"—and it's very simple—

"That Bill 164"—and it's this simple so they'd understand it—"be withdrawn."

I will sign my name to this and hopefully get it entered in to the Clerk's table.

1510

GAMBLING

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

This is signed by about 27 constituents of my riding, and I have signed this petition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr John Sola (Mississauga East): I have a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I am signing it as well.

CLOSURE OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I have a petition from the riding of Timiskaming.

"To Premier Rae, Treasurer Laughren, Minister Buchanan:

"We, the undersigned, request that you seriously consider reversing your decision to close the New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology."

I'll sign this.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ROSALIND BLAUER CENTRE FOR CHILD CARE ACT, 1993

On motion by Ms Haeck, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr34, An Act to revive Rosalind Blauer Centre for Child Care.

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Marchese, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr80, An Act respecting the City of Toronto.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

EXTENDED HOURS OF MEETING

Mr Charlton moved government notice of motion number 4:

That, notwithstanding standing order 9, the House shall continue to meet from 6 pm to 12 midnight on June 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23 and 24, 1993, at which time the Speaker shall adjourn the House without motion until the next sessional day.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the House leader have any introductory remarks?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Yes, I do, thank you, Mr Speaker. In moving this motion, I want to note just a few things for the House that I think become important in terms of how we deal with and consider the questions that will face us, both over the course of the rest of the next week and a half and any time beyond June 24.

The members opposite will know that although we haven't debated a motion to sit beyond June 24 yet, I have tabled that motion and in my discussions with the House leaders opposite I have made it very clear that the government has a priority legislative agenda and that we intend to finish that agenda during the course of this spring session.

We have had a situation since the beginning of this Parliament, for the last two and a half years since the election in September 1990, when the behaviour of this House in terms of its attention to legislation has changed quite dramatically.

I made reference both during a debate on a time allocation motion a week and a half ago, and provided some further information last week on a similar debate, about time spent on legislation in this House. We have heard a number of accusations from the opposition on a fairly regular basis that changes to the standing orders of this House that were implemented last year about this time have gutted the democratic process. But the reality is that the members opposite, both the members of the official opposition and the members of the third party, have been and are still spending more time debating legislation than has been true in the history of this Legislature.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Charlton: Facts are facts. Some of the members across the way say, "Oh, Brian," but facts become facts.

I talked a week and a half ago about the amount of time that was being spent on third readings, and I talked last week about the fact that overall, in general, on every single piece of legislation we're now operating at 240% of the norm, the tradition in this House.

The members across the way like to talk about the

traditions in this House, and the traditions in this House have been, throughout all of the 16 years I've been here—at least until recently—that opposition members debated at length on particularly controversial pieces of legislation, they debated at length on those things around which they had very primary fundamental disagreement with the government direction, but for the most part, as to the government's right to govern and to implement administrative and policy and program changes, although opposition has commented, it hasn't used all of those pieces of legislation, on a consistent, ongoing, repeated basis, to tie up movement of government programs through the Legislative Assembly.

Interjection: What about the budget, Brian? One day.

Hon Mr Charlton: A member opposite is again referring to time for budget debate. I have said, and I will repeat here this afternoon, that if the members of the opposition want to have extensive time to debate the budget, this government House leader is prepared to see that they get that when they're prepared to bring the time spent on average legislation in this House back down into a normal domain.

As I said a few moments ago, for two and a half years now this House has been operating, in terms of debating time on legislation, at 240%, 2.4 times the amount of debate on each and every single piece of legislation that the traditions of this House would indicate. That doesn't say to me that members are just taking up their normal right to speak, express their opinions. That says to me that when you look back over a decade or 15 years or 20 years and find that the old norms, the old traditions, held and held well, in fact the members of the opposition are abusing the debate process in this House from the perspective of a very intentional tactic to slow down the government legislative agenda.

1520

This government is not going to put up with that any longer. Even with all of the rule changes that occurred last year, rule changes which, as I said a few moments ago, members across the way would suggest have gutted their right to speak, they're still speaking at 2.4 times the rate on every piece of legislation than what has been the norm. Now, in any democratic parliamentary system, there should be a right to speak. There should be a right to be heard. But that right to speak and that right to be heard, when it becomes consistently a tactical abuse, has to be dealt with.

One of the reasons why the rule changes were made last year and one of the things that could drive this government, or any other government for that matter, to consider further rule changes and further restrictions on the practice in this House is that continued abuse of time in this House, both on controversial legislation and on non-controversial legislation. But, more importantly,

one of the reasons this Legislature has always had among the most small-l liberal rules in its standing orders, one of the reasons this Legislature hasn't proceeded as quickly as others to toughen up the rules, to restrict members by standing order and set-out procedures, is because traditionally the House leaders' process in this place has worked. It has worked because, when I was in opposition, along for a time with Liberals and along for a time with Tories, the House leaders sat down with the government House leader and, yes, took tough positions on controversial, fundamental legislation around which there were differences, but also facilitated in a significant way the passage of non-controversial government legislation.

The reason I raised two weeks ago what has happened with third reading debates is because third reading debates become a very important reflection of what's gone on here for the last two and a half years. I'd like to repeat some of those figures so that perhaps they can start to sink into some members' heads.

From 1981 till 1985, during the last Conservative administration, the average time, although it varied from session to session—in the first session of that Parliament, the average time spent on third reading was four minutes. In the second session of that Parliament, the average time was 10 minutes. If you'll recall, Mr Speaker, because I think you were here at that time, that was 1982, the year in which we had a number of very controversial pieces of legislation, and even with that, we only got up to 10 minutes average time spent on third readings. In the third session, 47 seconds was the average time, and in the fourth and last session of that government, an average of three minutes was spent on third readings.

Now, it is true that during the Liberal years—not all of five of them, because for two of those five years we had a minority government and an accord between the official opposition and the government around a number of issues, so obviously there wasn't the same level of debate that occurred in those two years. But for the three years from 1987 to 1990 during the Liberal administration, in the first session of that Parliament, we spent an average of seven minutes on third readings. In the second session of that Parliament, we spent an average of 15 minutes on third readings. Again, Mr Speaker, you were here and you will recall that in that last session before the 1990 election, we had a number of very controversial pieces of legislation, including the Liberal auto insurance legislation, which for many of us became a quite famous and memory-burning piece of legislation. But even with those controversial pieces, we only achieved an average of 15 minutes for third readings.

During and throughout this entire Parliament, we have seen a continuous escalation of opposition tactics against government legislation that is, in my view,

beyond the call of anything reasonable or acceptable. In the first session it was 48 minutes, on average, for third readings. In the second session that jumped from 48 minutes to an average of 122 minutes, on an average debate on an average bill, on third reading, and in the current session we've jumped to 171 minutes, on average, debating third readings.

Mr Speaker, that doesn't reflect a set of standing orders and rules in this place which is slowing down or restricting, silencing opposition members. That in fact reflects the opposite, which I've suggested to you, which is an intentional abuse of the process of this House by opposition members.

When we take into account first reading, second reading, committee stage and third readings, on average, uncontroversial legislation and controversial legislation, we're now operating at 240% of the norm. I repeat that that is unacceptable to this government. It is happening, though, because the House leaders' process has failed.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Get a new House leader.

Hon Mr Charlton: One of the opposition members, in fact the chief whip, would suggest that we should get a new House leader. My response is that the members across the way had either better get a new House leader, give some direction to the one they have in terms of normalizing the process in this House, or have to face, somewhere not too far down the road, further rule changes.

As I've said on a number of occasions, and I'll repeat it again today, this government has a legislative priority agenda. We have some two years left to complete that agenda. We can no longer afford to continue to bump dozens of pieces of legislation from one session into the next.

I have said before in this House, and I want to repeat it again this afternoon, that this session will continue until our legislative agenda is complete. This House will continue to sit. A number of opposition members approach me daily trying to find out when we're going to get out of here, and I want to suggest to all of the opposition members that we're going to get out of here when the members across the way come to their senses and start dealing with legislation in a responsible and reasonable way.

None of us likes sitting late in the evenings, either. The motion we're dealing with here today will have us sitting late tonight and for the next eight evenings. We will sit late because the opposition has made it necessary for us to sit late, and we will sit past June 24 if the opposition decides to make us sit past June 24, and we will sit past July 1, because we will proceed to finish the government's legislative agenda. And if we can't re-establish the tradition of this House around a useful, workable House leaders' process that can help us in a

reasonable and effective way to deal with the orderly business of this House, albeit from time to time there will be controversial pieces of legislation around which the opposition feels a need to have a prolonged debate—that's not unacceptable, but it is unacceptable on every single piece of government legislation—we will either re-establish a reasonable process around here or we will have to deal with the consequences of that.

1530

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): The last time I dealt with the issue of rules of this House, I was certainly exercised and not in the same jovial mood I'm in this afternoon, I must say.

I always find it difficult when the government House leader, who always has to be a heavy, is in the House threatening the opposition with what's going to happen if the opposition isn't compliant.

First of all, I should tell him that I intend to be supporting this motion to sit for these evenings. That's part of the rules. It's a provision there when the work of the House backs up. It's not convenient for members because they have a lot of things to do back in their ridings, a lot of explaining to do about government legislation and so on, but I'm more than happy to be very cooperative with the government in this regard and with other members of the House. I hope tonight, for instance, to have a chance to come back to speak on the Sunday shopping issue.

By the way, if the government House leader feels he must leave for other business, I won't be offended when he leaves, because I know he'll read the full Hansard of all my remarks.

What I want to indicate, first of all, is the cooperation of the opposition in this regard. It's difficult for ministers and members of the House to have to sit well into the evenings when they have already been at meetings all day.

I should point out, for those who might be watching this program, that many ministers are starting at 8 o'clock in the morning at some of their meetings. To go through right to midnight is a very compelling schedule and very difficult, so I wonder why the government House leader would want to torture his colleagues within the cabinet in this regard. But they are bears for punishment, I suppose, and will continue to work hard. I do want to indicate that they work very hard. I've always supported the considerable pay that members of the cabinet get, which is over and above the rest of us in the House, particularly those who have special responsibilities, because it is a very onerous task.

I want to deal with a couple of issues that this particular motion permits me to. First of all, I don't know that legislation gets the kind of intense scrutiny that it should in night sittings, but it does allow the opportunity for more people to be able to speak on the

various bills that come before the House.

I expressed a great concern last year when the Premier rammed through the House, with his majority, some rule changes that were certainly contrary to what he stood for in his entire life in both the federal Parliament and the provincial Legislature, but we have seen 180-degree turns by the Premier on many occasions so I suppose nothing should surprise me today.

What does surprise me is that the Premier has abdicated his position this week, a very important week for the government. The Treasurer, now called the Minister of Finance, had to bring a very important bill in. Today there were some significant questions directed to the government, and of course the government caucus meets on Tuesday morning. I would have thought it would have been appropriate that instead of hobnobbing with the Rhodes Scholars—I know he's a Rhodes Scholar and I congratulate the Premier on being a Rhodes Scholar—he should have been in this House answering questions and being with his caucus, to assure them of some of the difficulties they'll be facing and that he believed these difficulties could be overcome.

I have objected strenuously to the Premier's absence from this House on many occasions. I've done so—this gets into the issue of why we're sitting at night—because the House never seems to sit. I point out to members of the House, who may not recall this, that the House sat on December 10, 1992. The next time it sat was April 13, 1993. That's over four months that the government did not have this House in session. That meant that the Premier and members of the cabinet could avoid the news media, who line up outside the Legislature each day to ask questions, and, of course, avoid the kinds of questions that come not only from members of the opposition, but I've heard some sharp questions that have come from members of the government, who are obviously feeling heat on certain issues at home and want to bring to the attention of the ministers the concerns that are being expressed by the people there.

So I must say that I think it's unwise for the Premier to be down in Washington. If he wants to go to Washington in the summer and talk to those people or in the winter break, that's fine. I think he has a role to play; I don't deny him that opportunity. I just think it would have been wise in these times of crisis that the Premier not simply leave it to the Treasurer, who's a very capable individual, and a few other ministers to carry the game in the House while he heads to Washington on so-called more important business.

Perhaps it's just an opposition point of view, and I have no statistics to substantiate this, but it's an observation that we seem to have a lot of absences of ministers. Now, ministers have a lot of things to do and some ministers are quite faithful in their attendance in the House. I must give them credit for that, because I know

the many responsibilities that they have, but there seem to be more absences than usual and again, perhaps that's just an observation because I'm now on this side and see that and because I have a special responsibility as deputy House leader to arrange question period and I see that there are several ministers absent from time to time, but I always felt, particularly with the House sitting as few days as it does, that it would be nice to have the ministers here for not only the members of the opposition but members of the government to direct questions to them.

One of the reasons we may be sitting at night is because the government wants to bring in legislation which is clearly contrary to established NDP policy. Two I think of; one, for instance, is the—and I have a piece of information that will be useful a little later on in my discussion, provided by the member for Etobicoke West, Mr Stockwell. But I do want to say that perhaps it's Sunday shopping, perhaps it's casino gambling that will consume some of the time that this House will be spending on legislation. I would not have thought there would have been a need for either bill because I clearly listened to the Premier during the last election campaign and I have his speeches in the Legislature on this and I was certainly supportive of his position on this when he said that he didn't want to have a wide-open Sunday in the province of Ontario. But we're going to have that as a result of the Premier's initiative.

Second, I happen to know that one of the strongest opponents of casino gambling has traditionally been Premier Rae. He is now, if not—I can't say complicit in—he is the initiator, as the Premier of this province, of casino gambling, something which the NDP has stood against for years. Mel Swart, the former NDP member for Welland-Thorold, who will be celebrating very soon his 74th birthday in the town of Thorold, on Richmond Street where he resides, is a person I know who would be opposed both to the position of the government on Sunday shopping and the position of the government on casino gambling. I think one of the reasons we're sitting at night is so we can put these bills through. That's most unfortunate because I agreed with the original NDP position on both of those particular issues, that of casino gambling, which I think is not in the best interests of the province of Ontario, and of course Sunday shopping or a wide-open Sunday, which the NDP used to stand against.

I want to indicate, as well, that I note over there some signs of dissension, and that's perhaps normal when there are some difficult circumstances facing the government. I happened to have a chance last night to watch on television the comments of the present member for Welland-Thorold, Mr Kormos, who is not complimentary of legislation that was brought in by the government. I think Mr Morrow as well had indicated

his disapproval. Both of them are carrying on in the tradition of being frugal.

I remember when there was the retreat at the posh surroundings of Queen's Landing in Niagara-on-the-Lake; I even went down there to see it. I went down to see it because I had read about it in the newspaper and had seen it on television, and they kept saying this place was posh. So I went down, I drove past, I encountered one of the cabinet ministers in the street, asked this person if it was as posh as everybody said it was. He indicated clearly to me that they had a special deal and it wasn't posh and that there was no need for Mr Kormos and Mr Morrow to be having a brown-bag lunch in the lobby while everybody else ate caviare, whatever it was they had, in the establishment itself.

1540

Mrs Ellen MacKinnon (Lambton): It wasn't caviare.

Mr Bradley: I'm told it wasn't caviare. Mrs MacKinnon, the member for Lambton, says it was not caviare, so I will take her word for it, because she is a person who does not try to betray this House in any way. I'll take her word for that.

I see that there is considerable dissension. I understand why. Perhaps those people are annoyed that they're going to have to sit at night when they had many obligations back in their own ridings. For instance, I know that OPSEU and other public service unions are holding rallies and other meetings back in the constituencies. I wish I could get back to some of those meetings so I could discuss with the brothers and sisters the problems that exist with this government, because I know that many of them worked very hard to unseat the previous government and elect this government. I think they probably thought that with the number of people who came from public sector unions who are sitting in the government caucus this time, they could probably count upon this government to at least be fair.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I've been in this House eight years now. I always know that the member for St Catharines has very valuable comments to make.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Your point of order, please.

Mrs Marland: My point of order is that I think it would be to the benefit of more members to be present to form a quorum in this House.

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is present. The honourable member for St Catharines can resume his participation.

Mr Bradley: I thank the member for Mississauga South for her kindness in attempting to ensure that there are sufficient people in this House.

The report that the government House leader always gives out—and there are certain news organs that take it as said, that print verbatim the government line, and others that do not. But the line that they will put out in this case is that the opposition is delaying all this legislation and if only they could get it through, all would be fine. What has to happen, as you understand as a long-time member of this House, Mr Speaker, is that the government has to actually bring this legislation forward.

Very often there are some relatively minor bills that can be processed in this House very quickly. They have the consent of the three parties, perhaps a few very brief remarks from representatives of each of the parties and they can pass. What the government does is it hides all these bills in the background and then tells the people in local municipalities that these bills will never pass because the opposition's holding them up. But I'm sure there would be acquiescence to allow these relatively minor bills, if only the government would bring them forward. They seem to bring bills forward at the very last minute for consideration.

I'm awaiting the casino gambling bill. I wish I had more than 30 minutes to speak on it. But Bob Rae has limited my ability to address an issue of that importance to some 30 minutes. I wish there were more flexibility. The Premier, by bringing in his rules, has almost ensured that the opposition takes 90 minutes, as they are entitled to, as their initial remarks on any particular bill. Subsequent speeches are usually 30 minutes.

In the past, my recollection has been that in this House members have spoken less than that on bills which were not particularly significant to them. But there seems to be an obligation now to speak at length because of the rules that happen to exist. I think those rules were ill-conceived. They were ill-conceived for a few basic reasons.

They limited the amount of time that members of this House can address important legislation and issues of the day. What reminded me of this was the constitutional debate, the referendum debate that took place in this House. I refused to take 10 minutes to speak on something of that importance and instead yielded time to one of my colleagues so that it could be addressed in a more comprehensive manner.

If we had the flexibility, I think we would find that members of all sides would be able to participate in a more meaningful way. But the rigid rules that the Premier has set ensure that there are going to be some lengthy speeches when we don't always want to have those lengthy speeches.

The government wonders as well why some lengthy

debate does take place. I submit to the House that some of the legislation—not all of the legislation, but some of the legislation—submitted by this government is clearly at odds with what the majority of the province believes. This is essentially a group of people who are very committed to their cause, or have been in the past until reality has changed a lot of that, but essentially I always looked at the NDP as a group of people who are very committed to specific causes which had the support of perhaps 20% or 25% of the people in the province.

So when you bring forward controversial legislation, you must expect that there's going to be considerable debate on it. It will still carry. The government has a majority. The government was legitimately elected as a majority. There are people now who complain, "Well, the government got just under 38% of the vote." Those were the rules of the day when the government was elected. Nobody said, before the election, anything about those rules. So if they didn't like them before and they don't like them after, it's too bad. The government was legitimately elected and can pass legislation.

I'm simply suggesting that debate in this House should be meaningful, that it should move the government to make some changes in its legislation to make it more acceptable to mainstream Ontario.

I look at the attitude of the Premier to the Legislature. I was always a person who, from a distance, admired Bob Rae when he was in the federal House. He had the quick turn of phrase, he was the darling of the news media, particularly the CBC, in Ottawa when he was in Ottawa, and he was quite articulate. He was described as articulate and bright and so on and a fresh face on the scene, and indeed, when he was in Ottawa, I think he maintained that reputation throughout.

Well, he came to Queen's Park—and it's a different venue; I understand that—and was not quite so successful, but was still considered to be a member of this House who had principles and who stood for parliamentary democracy. That is why I found it so annoying and so disappointing and discouraging when we had the new rules of the House implemented last summer which in fact limited the role of members of this House.

What it did, and why I remain annoyed about those rules, is that it really gives power to the people who sit under the press gallery. These are people who are not elected. At least the people who sit in this House, whether one agrees or disagrees, are people who are directly accountable to the electorate in their particular constituencies and therefore tend to reflect the views of people in those constituencies. The people in the constituencies, rather, can get at these people. They can't get at the brains trust in the Premier's office, they can't get at the brains trust in the ministers' offices, but they can get at those of us who are elected members.

That is why I was particularly annoyed that we saw these changes. They took power away from the Speaker,

they allowed ministers, almost at will, to dictate how much time would be devoted to each of the bills. I know there are government members today who will no doubt like to speak at some length to the legislation the Treasurer introduced just the other day because they will want to debate fully the ramifications of that legislation, either to defend it or in some cases to be critical of it.

I heard a threat at the last minute from the government House leader, the kind of threat one doesn't like to hear, because he said in effect, "If you don't behave now, if you don't behave the way we want," then there's a veiled threat of some new rule changes, not just the ones that exist now, which are draconian enough, but new rule changes which will further limit the role of individual members of this House, particularly those in the opposition. And when this government goes back into opposition, if the electorate chooses that to be the case, they will find themselves very restricted in their ability to carry out their responsibilities as elected members.

I wanted to leave some time to my colleague the member for Mississauga West, who indicated I should stop at 1:18, which is a short period of time. I still have some further time.

I wanted to say that I have been reading with a good deal of interest what some of my former colleagues in this House have been saying about the government. Mike Davison, the member for Hamilton Centre in years gone by, is someone I always admired in this House as being an independent-minded individual, a reformer. The member for Etobicoke West, who used to watch this House on television and read about it, probably admired Michael Davison, the former member, even if he didn't agree with him.

He's had some interesting things to say about the government, a couple of articles in fact. He said Bob Rae must be defeated as leader at the NDP convention. I don't know whether that means this weekend; I think this is just a provincial council this weekend. I would like to attend the provincial council this weekend to remind the members of the government caucus where they stood on various issues.

1550

From time to time I found myself in disagreement but, as I've said in this House on many occasions, I always thought the other parties perhaps didn't adhere to policies as close as the NDP; that what the rank and file of the NDP had to say about the various issues before the government of Ontario counted; that Bob Rae and his cabinet and members of the caucus were truly accountable to the provincial council which represented the NDP across Ontario.

It ought to be a good accountability session this weekend. I hope it's in the open. I hope the Premier doesn't shut the doors, as he did on previous provincial

councils, and not allow that accountability session to be in public.

I remember when I used to have to go to the annual meeting of the Liberal Party, we would have an accountability session where the news media were present, members could ask anything they wanted and sometimes those questions could be pointed and could be embarrassing.

The Premier, who is a great believer in removing the doors and being wide open in his policies of openness towards government, decided he would shut the doors, and all of the questions that took place, all of the criticisms that took place and perhaps some of the praise, that was all conducted behind closed doors, contrary to what I would have expected from the New Democratic Party, which over the years has had a tradition of being in favour of openness and democracy.

I know the member for Mississauga South would certainly agree with me, having observed this since her election to this House.

Mrs Marland: I do.

Mr Bradley: She has confirmed that indeed she does.

Now, the final conclusion of Michael Davison is—he says: “The NDP is losing its way in Ontario. It is dragging down the federal party and it must, in my view, now begin the long journey home.”

The long journey home may in fact begin in Gananoque this weekend. That may be the beginning of a long journey home, but part of this long journey home is going to involve debates in this House which will take place over the next period of time, some of them till midnight.

I hope government members get a chance to speak on legislation. I know that in order to get the bills through the House, the government House leader and others are sometimes restricting the government members.

I suspect that one of the annoyances of the member for Perth, who recently resigned from the cabinet, was in fact—I remember one debate in here where she was told she could speak a certain period of time. That was reduced, reduced further, and then she was told she couldn't speak at all on a particular piece of legislation or a resolution.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Who was that?

Mr Bradley: This is Karen Haslam, the member for Perth, who has resigned from the cabinet because of her disagreement with government policy.

Interjection.

Mr Bradley: No, she was speaking in the House on a piece of legislation. It was most unfortunate. I understand why the government does this. I understand the limitations in a debate. This happened in the House.

That may have been one of the reasons, besides the fact that she in principle believed this legislation is wrong. Karen Haslam, the member for Perth, as a person of principle said she could no longer sit in the cabinet, a cabinet which was making decisions which were clearly contrary to everything the New Democratic Party had stood for over the years.

I am sure there are many in the public sector union movement who will compliment her on the stand she took. I'm sure that will put considerable pressure on other members of the caucus as the representatives of OPSEU and CUPE and many of the other public sector unions come to the individual members of the NDP and suggest that perhaps they should take a principled stand on this piece of legislation and stand up for what they were elected upon and follow in similar steps.

The member for Welland-Thorold—I don't know what he's going to do. He has indicated publicly his great opposition and concern. I think he has indicated he's going to vote against any legislation in this regard. The member for Wentworth East too has been very independent-minded and has indicated something similar.

It will be interesting to see as we go on, as we debate to midnight each night, how many members of the government will continue to support the kind of legislation, the kind of financial policy, which is being brought forward by this government.

It must be mighty difficult. I sympathize completely. I see the glum looks on the faces of the members of the government. I see that they're very tired. Only the member for Sudbury is smiling and I won't say why. She must have had some bad water over there or something, but she is smiling at the present time.

Anyway, I indicated to the member for Mississauga West that I would like to save him some time. I know the member for Etobicoke is eager and the third party House leader, Mr Eves, is probably eager to speak on this particular resolution, but I want to indicate clearly the support of the Ontario Liberal caucus, despite the fact it's an inconvenience for government members, for members of the cabinet, perhaps for the staff in this Legislature and for all members who would like to be at other meetings, important meetings with their constituents in their constituencies.

I know that it's going to be difficult but I'm quite willing to see the House sit. I'm quite willing to participate, to be here to midnight. I'm looking forward with great anticipation to making my speech on Sunday shopping, because I intend to use all of the arguments that the Premier has used in the past to enunciate my position, and if the government House leader would like us to sit all summer, I'm delighted to sit all summer.

There is air-conditioning in this building now. I know that, so there is some comfort. I look forward to all of

the question periods where we will be able to direct important questions of urgent interest to the people of this province and also I know that the news media will be interested being out in the hallway to, as we say, scrum, meaning interview intensely the members of the government.

So you have the full support of the Liberal caucus for this initiative. We're just being as cooperative as ever in this and all matters before the House.

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): It's a pleasure for me to partake in this debate on this particular motion at this time. I'm not so sure, however, that I share the enthusiasm of the member for St Catharines for extension of sitting hours.

I want to start by going back to what the rationale for extended sitting hours is in the first place. The rationale for extended sitting hours is that during the last eight days of a session, the hours can be extended until no later than midnight so that legislation can be cleaned up during the last eight days.

Is the government House leader telling us unequivocally that we will be out of here next Thursday and these are the last eight days and that's why he's introduced the motion? That is the reason why he's supposed to introduce the motion. That's the only reason the standing order exists in the first place.

It seems to me that we went through this last year, if I'm not mistaken. We went through this charade about pretending how hard we're working here that we have to sit till midnight for eight days, but we're going to sit for another three or four weeks after that anyway. So who's kidding who?

We went through this last year. If we were serious about getting the legislative agenda cleared up, we'd have been back here on March 22, when we were supposed to be back here, instead of on April 13, some three weeks later. There's three weeks of time. If time is what he needs, he would have done the responsible thing, and members of all three parties, I recall, when we implemented the parliamentary calendar around here, were totally in favour of having a parliamentary calendar that would be rigidly adhered to, never deviated from—just to quote some of my NDP friends who now find themselves in government—so we could do things in a responsible, logical manner. So much for responsible, logical government.

We have a parliamentary calendar that says we come back on March 22 and we come back on April 13 anyway. Why did we not come back until April 13, I ask myself. Why weren't we here on March 22? If we had all these important pieces of legislation, if the government knew what it was doing and had to get done, surely they were important enough to come back when the parliamentary calendar said so. Why weren't we here? What happened the week of March 22, the

week of March 29 and the first week in April? Why weren't we here doing this important business? Why did we leave everything till the 11th hour?

Why didn't we talk about social contract legislation in April and May? It would have made some sense to do it before March 31, but we didn't even want to sit in March. We didn't want to start to sit until April 13, and now we're going to go through the charade of sitting till midnight, as we did last year, for some seven or eight days, to make the public think we're working hard, and then we're going to sit for another three or four weeks in July anyway.

1600

Who's kidding whom? This is a charade. The purpose of this standing order and this motion is to clean up business during the last eight sessional days. If somebody on the government side wants to stand up and swear under oath that these are the last eight sessional days, I'll support the motion wholeheartedly. But if you're going to tell me, "I'm doing this to go through the political optics of pretending that I'm working hard and pretending to try and get it done when I didn't come back here on March 22 for the second year in a row, as I was supposed to," that's a joke and I don't support it. We should have been here the week of March 22, we should have been here the week of March 29—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The member for Parry Sound has the floor. Please allow him the privilege of participating.

Mr Eves: The reality is that this motion wouldn't have even been needed if the government would have been back here March 22. With its legislative agenda for the spring session in order on March 22, we'd have had all this done by now. But instead, we don't show up for three weeks and then we decide, "Ah, gee, I guess we'd better sit till midnight to make it look like we're doing something and then we'll sit here in July anyway." What sense does that make? It doesn't make any sense whatsoever.

We went through it last year. We did exactly the same thing last year. We came back late—I think it was the first week in April last year instead of the second week in April—and then we sat here for the month of July. We sat till midnight for two weeks in June. We played the charade and we tried to pretend we were working hard till midnight. But we're going to sit for another three or four weeks anyway. Who's kidding whom?

If you really had a job to do and you had an agenda to accomplish and you wanted to get it done, you should have been back on March 22, two years in a row, and you wouldn't have had this problem.

Going back to when we did come back in April, I can

recall, without telling any tales out of school, going to House leaders' meetings for about the first five or six weeks that we reconvened and asking every single week of the government: "Can we have a list of the legislation that you want to pass? Surely, having come back three weeks late, you have your act together, you have all your legislation drafted, you know what you want to do and you can give me a list." "Oh yeah, I'll get that for you next week," they said at the first meeting.

Next week became the week after that, the week after that, the week after that, the week after that. I think it was about the end of May or beginning of June that we finally got a list of 25 pieces of legislation that had to be passed, some of which didn't even have a government bill number because they hadn't been introduced yet. We have a whole pile of others listed here that have to be dealt with in the committee summer intersession, if there is a committee summer intersession, because we're going to be here most of the summer to accomplish this list that the government should have had ready on March 22 and finally got ready by about the end of May, only two months late.

There's two months' wasted time and now we want to sit till midnight for seven days to pretend we can do in seven days, from 6 pm to 12 pm, what we should have been doing the three weeks that we didn't sit, the list that we should have had ready on March 22, that we didn't get ready till about May 22.

Having talked about the government's legislative agenda, I would also like to talk about the manner in which the budget has been introduced the last two years under this government. For the last two years in a row, not only has this government not come back in March, when it's supposed to according to the legislative calendar, not only has it come back about three weeks to four weeks late each spring, but also, just accidentally on purpose, I'm sure, for two years in a row now, instead of introducing the budget when it is normally introduced, in late April or very early in May, one year it waited till the day before we took a break week and this year it was really kind and did it one day before we left for a break week.

I'm sure that is totally accidental. I'm sure it had nothing to do with trying to control political fallout. I'm sure it was not machiavellian in any way, shape or form. It's just a freak of nature. I mean, we've been around this place for 125 years and the last two years in a row it just so happens that the Treasurer can't get his act together until just before he's ready to leave on a nine-day vacation. I'm sure it just worked out that way. I'm sure nobody sat down and thought: "Jeez, if we introduce it then, nobody will be able to ask us questions about it in question period. The media won't be able to harpoon us every day in question period, because the House won't be sitting for a week." I'm sure that's just a coincidence.

This is the same government that can't get its act together on March 22. Not only does the House come back three weeks to four weeks late, the budget's introduced three to four weeks late, and it's always introduced just before we have to go on a little off-time for a week. We worked so hard we came back a month late, and now we've got to take a week off because we've worked so hard.

Now we're going through the same charade that we went through last year. Somebody gives you a list of 25 or 35 pieces of legislation. They give it to you four weeks before you're supposed to be out of here and say: "What's the problem? Why can't we do all this business of these 25 or 35 pieces in the next four weeks?"

You're supposed to do it in three or four months. If you would have had this list ready and we had been sitting in our places on March 22, it would be done by now and you wouldn't be negotiating or talking about a motion to sit from 6 pm till 12 midnight for the next seven days to try and make it look like you were working when you should have been here.

As I recall, when you introduced the calendar, you also had us come back later than we normally had traditionally done. You also gave us two constituency weeks off, which we never had before, one in May and one in November. You also have us leaving here one week earlier in December. So not only did you shorten the calendar by three weeks to start with; you don't adhere to the calendar and you come back another three weeks late.

Then you wonder why you have to introduce a motion like this to sit till midnight. Give me a break. You just wrote off six weeks when you could have been doing business, and now you want to sit till midnight because you took six weeks' vacation.

Let me get this straight. You don't want to be here, you don't have your act together when you're supposed to have it together, yet you want to sit till midnight so you can try to fool the public into thinking how hard you're working and you're trying to get this cleaned up.

Look at what's happened with the social contract legislation. If the government really had its act together, it would have been into this. If they knew that's what they wanted to do and they aren't just knee-jerk reacting to a problem that's been there for a long time, if this is really and truly a seriously well-thought-out, responsible agenda by this government and piece of legislation, they would have been doing this negotiating in January, February and March. By the time the House reconvened on March 22, they would have had the legislation on the table ready to go so that their partners would know, when the fiscal year started on April 1, what they were dealing with.

Now we have legislation that's introduced. We sit on our hands. We do nothing. We come back a month late.

We wait until the end of May, beginning of June to get serious about it. We give people a deadline of June 4 instead of April 1, and now we extend that deadline till August 1.

That's why we have to sit in here for the next seven nights till 12 o'clock, to make up for the incompetence of the government, which obviously doesn't know what it's doing, which obviously had no plan in January, February or March. They dreamed one up in late May, early June, and then they decided to go ahead, and now they want to make it look like they're working really hard.

Well, I'm here to tell you that they weren't. They weren't here on March 22 like they were supposed to be. They didn't have a plan of action. They did not have anything done with respect to social contract negotiation or legislation in January, February and March, like a responsible government would have. They didn't return to work until the middle of April. Then when they finally got back here, it took them until the end of May, the beginning of June to get serious. Then they wonder why we're sitting here and we don't have these pieces of legislation that they didn't give us till the end of May, for the large part, wonder why we don't have them passed yet. Because we didn't introduce them in time. Because we didn't have our act together.

1610

This is the second year in a row I've had to give this speech, and I'm getting a little tired of it. If nothing else, please, I say to the government, next year try to adhere to the parliamentary calendar. When you're out of this place and the House isn't sitting for three or four months at a time, try to get your act together, draft your legislation, do your work, so that the day the House reconvenes, you've got your act together, you know what you're doing and you're ready to go ahead.

This year, we may as well have come back here, quite frankly, about the third week in May, because nobody did anything until then anyway. Nobody had their act together. The government certainly didn't have its act together. It didn't introduce its social contract legislation until this week, in the middle of June. Why the middle of June? Why wasn't this done in the middle of March like it was supposed to be done?

Now we come back here some three months later and we're going to deal with the problem we should have dealt with on March 22. They wonder why their social contract partners, as they call them—"partners" is a funny name. You don't treat partners the way this government is treating some of the transfer agencies that it gives out percentages of money to. You do not come about partway—in some cases, those that have a calendar fiscal year, those transfer agencies and those agencies, are really up against it. We are almost six months into their year and you're asking them to try to straighten this mess up for an entire fiscal year. That is

totally unacceptable and not very responsible on behalf of the provincial government. It is totally irresponsible.

Mr Mahoney: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Even though this is the second time the honourable House leader for the third party has been forced to give this speech, I think someone should be here to listen to it. There doesn't appear to be a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: Is a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals (Mr Alex D. McFedries): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

Mr Stockwell: We've got more members than you do over there.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Parry Sound can resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Eves: The point made by the honourable member for Etobicoke West that we had more members here than the government did over there, I think is probably indicative of the result after the next provincial election.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): You better check with what is happening federally first.

Mr Eves: We don't worry about federal Conservatives; we worry about provincial Conservatives.

Mr Mahoney: You can't deny the federal Conservatives.

Mr Eves: No, we don't. They are federal Conservatives. Different party.

Mr Speaker, I think I will turn the floor over now to somebody else. I just wanted to make the point that this whole thing and this motion is indeed a charade. It is a public relations exercise that doesn't establish any good relations with the public and it is strictly a PR gesture to try to convince the public that something is being done when everybody who is in here knows that it is merely a time filler and an attempt by the government to look like it's trying to do something that it should have been doing between March 22 and April 13, for the second year in a row.

I hope we don't have to be back here doing this again next year, because three strikes and they may be out.

Mr Mahoney: I for the most part would echo many of the comments by the House leader for the third party in his sense of frustration.

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: I said for the most part. Certainly the political comments—I'll leave that to the people of Ontario to make that judgement.

I have the privilege of serving as the chief whip for the official opposition. As a result, I attend the House leaders' meetings on a regular basis. I've been through three different House leaders for the government. I forget her riding, but the current Minister of Northern

Development and Mines, Shelley Martel, was the first; the Minister of Education and Training, Dave Cooke, was the second; and now we have Mr Charlton as the House leader.

I don't think it's appropriate to get into the difference in personalities, even though they're quite substantive. But I'll stay away from that, because I get a sense that in the case of each House leader, they are earnest, perhaps would be a good word, in attempting to put forward the agenda of the government, and I respect that. What I have a great deal of difficulty with, though, are the tactics that are used and, when communication breaks down, the threats and the intimidation that occur.

I think the people of Ontario have some difficulty with that as well. If there's one thing I've heard in my six years or so in this place, it's been that the people of Ontario expect us to do what we're paid to do, and we are the opposition. Our job, I see it as fairly clear: As Her Majesty's loyal opposition in this place, the first job is to hold this government accountable. If you've got a majority government and it simply is allowed to run roughshod over the opposition, without the opposition having the opportunity to stand up and hold it accountable, without the opposition having the opportunity for full and public debate, without the opposition to put amendments—how many amendments to pieces of legislation has this government accepted? Could it be that every idea that comes from the opposition benches of duly elected MPPs is crazy? You might think so in your partisan moments, but the reality is that many good ideas come forward from these benches, and they get ignored.

I'll tell you what happens. You go to the committee hearings when a bill finally gets out of this forum and goes into committee, and there's a whip for the government side, a committee whip appointed by their chief whip. The whip says to his or her members, "Our job is to get this legislation in and out of this committee as fast as we possibly can, without any exceptions, without any amendments, without any changes, and don't listen to what the opposition says."

What are we supposed to do in opposition? We represent people. In my riding of Mississauga West, I represent close to 100,000 people from all three parties, most of them, I might add, being apolitical, not involved in any one of our parties. I've got to try to represent those people, whether it's on Bill 164 on auto insurance, whether it's on Sunday shopping, whether it's on casinos.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): Do they all agree with one another?

Mr Mahoney: No, they don't agree with one another, but what they do agree with, even if they didn't vote for the current sitting member, is that in true parliamentary tradition, that sitting member should be

given a voice, should be given a place to stand in this place and should be given an opportunity—

Mr Stockwell: To grow.

Mr Mahoney: We're all growing too much, I think at times, in certain areas—but should be given an opportunity to stand up and fight on behalf of those constituents. That's our role.

Mr Speaker, "hypocrisy" is not a word that's parliamentary, so I won't use it, but the thing that astounds people is to see this current government, this government of social democrats, this government that sat right where I currently stand—

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The points are well taken by the member for Mississauga West, salient as well. We need a quorum, though.

The Acting Speaker: Is a quorum present?

Acting Table Clerk (Mr Franco Carrozza): A quorum is not present.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The member for Mississauga West may resume.

Mr Mahoney: You know, I don't take it personally that members leave to go into the back room or go to their offices, but this clearly is a government that gets more quorum calls than I can ever remember any government getting in all the time I've been down here, let me tell you. You folks are paid to be here and work. I suggest the least you can do is keep 20 or so of your members here. You are the government, after all.

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural Resources): What a short memory you have.

Mr Mahoney: It's a convenient memory at times, I'll admit, but it's not really that short. I'll never forget what's-his-name.

1620

The point I was attempting to make is that we have a process here. This government talks about tradition. I heard the House leader actually have the nerve to get up and talk about respecting the traditions of this Legislature. When they sat on this side of the House, they were always disrupting attempts of the government to put legislation through.

Let's talk about the debate on Sunday shopping, how long it went. I even remember one member of the third party bringing in a rubber chicken and throwing it around; quite astronomical, the depths to which they sank in an attempt to make their point.

I remember public auto insurance so well. I was over there somewhere. I was where on a clear day you could see the Speaker, I was so far back in the back bench. But I can remember seeing, right up here in this corner, the only true New Democrat that I know left in this government, Peter Kormos; the only one who has steadfastly stood by the rules of the democratic socialist party of this—

Interjection.

Mr Mahoney: You deny that? You don't think Peter is a democratic socialist? Maybe he is a little bit extreme. I see everyone's head shaking, so I don't know. But the only true democrat—

Hon Mr Wildman: I didn't deny it. I denied the point about him being the only one.

Mr Mahoney: Well, if you were a true democrat, you would sure as heck not be supporting the current legislation on the floor by your Treasurer, let me tell you that. If you were a true democratic socialist, you would not be looking straight in the faces of your union buddies and telling them you're going to strip away their rights to collective bargaining, you're going to roll back their wages and you're going to totally destroy everything they've worked hard to build up. If you were a true democratic socialist, frankly, you would not be supporting that legislation.

The role of opposition, as I said before, is to have a place to stand and fight for the people who are under-represented, for the people who don't have a voice. They expect us to do it. What's the response of this government? At one of the recent House leader meetings I attended—here's the list. We're handed a list. I can never remember, in the time that I enjoyed being on the government side, our government preparing a list like this and saying to the opposition, "You'll do it my way or the highway." That's what he said. He said, "I'm the government House leader," with his chest out and his chin stuck into the air. Maybe it was his nose stuck into the air. He said, "Until you give me"—

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: I like the members opposite to get excited. I just want to make sure you're here and paying attention, I say to the minister. Delighted to see you.

He said, "We demand that you allow the government legislation to pass." I've got a question for the House leader.

Mr Wiseman: I know the government House leader. He never put it like that.

Mr Mahoney: You weren't there, sir. I was there.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Interjections are out of order, and I would like to remind the honourable member for Mississauga West to address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, I must admit that when I tease the bears and they get a little excited, it does draw me into the confrontation. I will attempt, sir, to put my remarks—but, Mr Speaker, I want you to know that this document was put in front of us, and then I hear the government House leader today say, "Until the opposition comes to their senses, we're going to sit here through July, through August, through September."

Well, I say, folks, let's go; let's do it. Every day

we're in this place is another day for question period, it's another day for us to hold all of you accountable, it's another day for us to go after the policies, the draconian legislation you're bringing forward. Let me tell you, we don't have a problem. You're the government. As your caucus falls apart, as the resignations start coming in daily, you're going to find it more and more difficult just to keep a quorum, never mind to get your legislation passed.

Let me go back to the roles, the traditions of this place. When legislation goes through for first reading and then it goes into second reading, it goes into committee of the whole or it goes out to committee for public hearings, and the government has its mind made up. I have said for some time that it's time this place, in a non-partisan way, looked at ways in which we can make the committee system work better. Instead of sending predetermined legislation drafted by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs for this province, why not identify a problem in this place prior to the legislation being drafted and send the problem to the committee?

Picture it: The minister would stand up and say: "Mr Speaker, we've identified a problem. Some of the people want to shop on Sunday in the province of Ontario and some of them don't. Some of the people want to work on Sunday because they need the money and some of them don't. We think there's a problem out there. We think there are some inequities. We want some answers. I, as the minister, would like to refer the issue," not the legislation, "to the committee, for them to travel, for them to investigate, for them to hold public hearings, for them to ask questions, for them to research, and I'd like to ask the committee to then come back with some recommended legislation." Imagine the difference.

The government members would not be required to go out in support of a piece of government legislation drafted up in a back room in the Whitney Block. They would not be given their marching orders by a whip. It would function very much like the select committee process functions, and that, as the Vice-Chair of the select committee on education for three years, I can tell you, worked in a very positive, constructive non-partisan way. In fact, the NDP member Mr Johnston, the former member from one of the Scarborough ridings, I believe, was a very active and helpful participant in that process, and it allowed us to write a non-partisan report. What's wrong with that?

That report can then come back into the Legislature for debate. If the government decides it's got to hold firm on certain positions within that report, it can do so. If the opposition decides, when it comes back in here, that it wants to oppose certain aspects of the report on which consensus was perhaps not achieved, on which it

was not unanimous, it can do so. In that way the public is served, because they have an opportunity to see non-partisan, duly elected representatives in action.

But this government would never adopt that. This government would have to actually agree to freedom for its members. They would actually have to release the trained seals and allow them to go to a committee and make constructive suggestions, and I know they would never agree to that.

We owe the people of Ontario, at the very least, an opportunity for some non-partisan debate at committees. We should be working together as legislators in an attempt to put in a system that will allow for that kind of non-partisanship to occur. Instead, what do we get? We get the committees all being predetermined, everything's a done deal, the whole thing is a sham, we go out and we pretend we're listening. It's absolutely incredible.

Do you know, in Kingston I was on a committee working on the auto insurance deal. The government would not allow one of its members on that committee an opportunity to speak or to ask questions. Guess who that member might have been.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): Who?

Mr Mahoney: Who do you think? Mr Kormos again. Here he is; he's got to come over to the opposition side of that committee and beg us to give him time from our allocated time so he could speak. Needless to say, we agreed to do that. We thought it was probably an interesting idea to hear one of the government members taking on the government about some of its own problems.

So when the House leader talks about tradition and talks about doing it his way, we have a system, frankly, that is not working in the best interests of the public, of the taxpayer, in this great province of Ontario.

I also heard the House leader say that he wanted an opportunity to pass some of the non-controversial legislation. I think we passed the first one on the list, the Ryerson Polytechnical University Statute Law Amendment Act, Bill 1. Well, to some there was some controversy over that—I recall the debate—but to most of us, we don't have a problem with that, and we will be cooperative in those areas.

1630

But how they can then bring down the hammer and time-allocate public auto insurance—it isn't really public, but it might as well be. It's a major change in the way the no-fault insurance bill has been operating quite successfully for some time in this province—they simply come down and bring down the hammer. They bring down the hammer on OTAB and invoke time allocation.

In essence, when they say that, as a government, to the members in opposition, they in turn say that to the

people whom we collectively represent, not just Mississauga West. Everyone who is represented by an opposition member is under siege in this province when we have an arrogant government simply intimidating members of the opposition, telling them that it's going to bring in the hammer, that it's going to invoke closure, that it's going to invoke time allocation, because it's a little tired of hearing the objections of the members opposite to them. That is really fundamentally against democracy and fundamentally contrary to parliamentary democracy, as we know it.

The House leader for the opposition says that unless we give them their omnibus bill on education, which clearly has an impact—we haven't had an opportunity to really debate that thoroughly—we're going to sit here as long as it takes. I've got news for them. The Liberal caucus is quite prepared to stay on the job and to stay in this place for as long as it takes to fight this government on the implementation of some of its programs which are destroying economic growth and opportunity in this province.

You know what? If I get asked one question several times a day—that question is not just by constituents but by people you meet anywhere you go in the province—they say, "How can we get rid of this government?"

I can't imagine what it's like to be an NDP backbencher and have to go home to your riding on the weekend and watch the trade union leaders lining up outside—

Mrs MacKinnon: It's no problem. We don't have a problem with them.

Mr Mahoney: No, you probably don't have a problem because you probably don't listen to them any more than you listen to amendments by the opposition. You're probably telling the trade labour movement that you're going to invoke closure on them somehow. You're going to shut them out of the process somehow. It's really quite remarkable.

Take a look at the CECBA bill.

Mr Speaker, might I, by the way, publicly, just for a very short time, take a moment to apologize to you, sir, for my outburst last week in this place, in losing my temper when you brought a ruling down. In having time to reflect on that, I did lose my temper and I apologize for doing that. Yes, sure it happens from time to time. It's a little bit of the Irish in me, but part of being Irish is not being afraid to admit you've made a mistake and that you apologize to the gentleman who is so offended; and I do so, sir.

But let me go back and just take a look—stop smiling. You look like a Cheshire cat up there. It isn't that big a deal.

Along with, I might add, legislation that the Treasurer introduces to totally suspend all collective bargaining in

the province of Ontario, then what do they do? They introduce legislation to give the right to strike to public servants. That's really quite a remarkable flip-flop, because imagine what's going to happen in 1996 when the current social contract negotiations—it's not negotiations; it's a hammer, it's legislation. That in fact is a form of closure on those people you call your partners. Those people in the municipalities and the school boards and everyone involved as your so-called transfer partners across the province have had a hammer put down on them. So you've come in with closure on them.

You guys are almost bullies. You're going around the province, you're muzzling the opposition, you're limiting debate, you change the rules—incredulous as you can imagine—after all of the filibustering. I don't know if the public understands that this is not a filibuster. What Peter Kormos did in public auto insurance for 17 hours, standing up here reading a phone book, giving off the lists of names in his riding, was filibuster. You're not allowed to do that any more. Bob Rae gets elected—

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: Well, he thought it was okay. I can remember the opposition members running in here with information for Kormos. They had a conga line coming from the third floor all the way down the stairs with little notes and tidbits and “So-and-so called,” and Peter would stand up and go, “Mr Speaker, I have a phone call here from John Doe in Mississauga, who says the following,” and then he'd get another message, somebody would come in, and he'd say, “I have another message here, Mr Speaker, from so-and-so in Perth.”

I mean, it was really quite a remarkable thing to watch. Some say it required a tremendous amount of talent. I don't know how much talent it requires to stand up and read the phone book and read phone messages for 17 hours, but in all due respect to the member, he did do a job of delaying and filibustering and stalling the government and taking away the due right of the government to have reasonable debate. He hogged the floor, he wouldn't allow other members to participate, and yet this government then gets elected—and, you know, it's interesting: The only way you guys can get legislation, because of the inability of your House leaders, all three of them so far, to put any kind of reasonable due process in place, is to invoke closure. That should tell you something. That should tell the government members opposite that maybe a lot of the legislation they're putting forward is flawed.

So you come along and you give Bill 40 to the labour movement and you tell the people in the labour movement that you're going to tip the playing field in their favour and everything's wonderful. Everybody's here—Gordie Wilson, Leo Gerard's up there—and everybody just thinks this is terrific, we got a social

democratic labour government that has given us everything we've ever wanted, that's going to allow us to organize, that's going to allow us to expand the trade labour movement, that's going to allow us to increase our dues and increase our revenue. It's going to allow the New Democrats to increase their party membership. Bill 40 was a pretty nice little gift-wrapped package for the big labour leaders—Mr White, Mr Gerard, all of those people. And we understand that.

We understand that in fact this government's hands, if they were to even come close to recognizing the social democratic principles that they were espousing, were tied. They had to deliver on Bill 40; they had to.

Now what's happened is they've totally—don't be too overly proud of that because what's happening to that on the business side is that the moving vans are going down the QE right by Mr Kormos's riding, let me tell you, right through Niagara Falls and across the river because they cannot survive in an atmosphere where you have polarized the trade labour movement—

Hon Mr Wildman: Bunkum.

Mr Mahoney: You have polarized the trade labour movement and the business community more than any government in history ever—more than some of the right-wing Tory governments could have done. At least they understood there was a necessity to have happy workers, to have well-paid workers, to have workers who were safe on the job, as we realized. It's important to have a balance; I understand that.

Even the trade labour leaders, even the people on the shop floor, the rank and file of the labour movement, they don't much care. They've been voting at their conventions to dump you guys. They've been passing resolutions all across the province that say, “We will no longer financially support the NDP.” I don't hear “Bunkum” from the opposition members on that one. I'm listening; they're not denying that. So that's happening; we agree on that.

Why is it happening? Could it be that they realize probably not so much a concern about the fact that you failed to follow the principles espoused in the Agenda for People and every other principle espoused when Bob Rae was the Leader of the Opposition down here and standing up and just bashing everything the government tried to do; what they realize more, the rank and file—not the highly paid, big-buck labour leaders, the rank and file on the shop floor—is that you are making life more difficult for their kids. They realize that you're making it more difficult for them just to take a holiday, to be able to keep their job, whether it's the Scarborough van plant or whether it's in Niagara Falls or whether it's in Windsor. They realize that you're so bankrupt both financially and morally and out of principles that you're resorting to gambling casinos as a way—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Order, please. Order. The member for Mississauga West has the floor. If you want to entertain some conversations, I would recommend that you do it outside the House.

1640

Mr Mahoney: If they do it outside the House, they won't have a quorum, so you can let them go. They're not bothering me in the least. Frankly, I don't think they much care what people on the opposition side have to say. I think they've proven that.

What we're really debating here is whether or not we should have night sittings. That is traditional. In the last two weeks of the sitting of the Legislature, in an attempt for the government to get more business done, we traditionally have agreed that we would sit at night. Frankly, I tell you that my party is in support of sitting at night. As a matter of fact, we think we should probably sit every night.

We should sit here in July. We should hold this government accountable for the mess it's creating. We should be in this place on August 1 when this government's self-imposed deadline on this legislation that is so draconian—it is more draconian than the War Measures Act under former Prime Minister Trudeau. It is. You read it. It is. It strips people of their democratic rights in this province. It goes way beyond anything anyone could ever have imagined.

Instead of calling together—

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think, again, he's right on topic and there should be a quorum to hear this.

The Deputy Speaker: Table, would you please check if there is a quorum.

Acting Table Clerk: Mr Speaker, there is no quorum present.

The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is present.

Mr Mahoney: The legislation I was referring to that's been introduced on the social contract—let's be clear, we in the Liberal caucus absolutely support the need for restraint. We need to change the way government does business. We've been saying that—my leader, Lyn McLeod, has been saying that for as long as she's been leader of this great party. I support that position.

We understand that this government has to look in the mirror and negotiate with its own employees and not just simply pass the buck on down to the lower levels of government—a trick, I might add, initiated by former Tory governments and brought to a great science by them, but now adopted by the Tory-come-lately party led by Bob Rae and Floyd Laughren.

Very clearly, it's important that we decide what business government should be in. We've got to get off

the back of small business. Instead of being on their back, we should be standing by their side. We've got to take a look at how can we reduce this paper burden on the business community, absolutely an incredible problem for anyone trying to—you have to hire a full-time accountant just to run a small retail operation when you get by the PST and the GST and the EHT and the MPT and the UIC and the WCB and the CPP. It's frightening for small business people.

What do we have? We have a government which thinks it can solve all the problems of the business community by taxing them more. You know what you're going to do by the tax increases? You're actually going to reduce the revenue you're going to enjoy as a government and then you're going to come back and say, "Gee whiz, we got lower revenue than we thought we had. I guess our deficit is not going to be \$9.2 billion," even though it really isn't to begin with because they put \$800 million into crown corporation debt. They create new crown corporations and say, "We don't have that debt any more."

Who do the crown corporations answer to, I ask you? It's very clear to me. They're responsible ultimately to the taxpayer. So the deficit really is \$10 billion. When this government wakes up and realizes that its tax increases—you know, they talk about, with great pride, "We eliminated the tire tax." Wonderful stuff. "We eliminated the commercial concentration tax." Wonderful stuff.

Hon Mr Wildman: Both inventions of the Liberals.

Mr Mahoney: Total revenue, I say to the Minister of Environment and Energy, for those two taxes was \$150 million a year. Terrific.

Then you put in place an insurance tax, a tax on every auto insurance, home owner insurance, small business insurance policy, liability insurance policy—on everybody, on every senior citizen, on every young driver, on every single mother, on every working family. They put a tax on their insurance.

Can people afford to live without insurance, I ask you? Think of the damage that would occur to a family if they were not to insure their home and they lost it. Think of the damage that would occur to a family if they were not to insure their automobile and they got in an accident and, God forbid, killed someone or lost a family member. It's not an option in modern-day society; you must have insurance to protect yourself against catastrophe.

So what does this government do? They say, "What's the one thing that every single man, woman and child in this province must have, and we'll tax it." Insurance premiums.

Now, \$150-million reduction in the taxes from the two taxes I mentioned. How much do you think is generated from the insurance tax? It's \$715 million; a

\$500-million tax grab by this government. You know why they did it? Because people's insurance policies come up at different times of the year, so there will never be one united outcry when they all get a tax bill. Mine expire in September; yours expire in July. It will happen over time. It's divide and conquer, exactly the same mentality in the sector-by-sector negotiations and the refusal of this government, supposedly the champion of organized labour, supposedly the champion of collective bargaining. This government divides and conquers and splits and totally polarizes the labour movement.

When could we ever imagine demonstrations in the lobby, a woman on this floor yesterday, who got in here screaming at a minister? People up in the galleries—and they're your people that are doing it—people in the galleries chanting and saying, "Shame on Floyd Laughren."

This government should be ashamed of itself. This House leader should be ashamed of his attempts to intimidate this opposition. Let me tell you in closing that this opposition will not be intimidated. This opposition will use every piece of parliamentary procedure we can to stop this government from destroying this great province of Ontario, anything we have to do. We will talk, we will debate, we will fight in committee and we will attempt to get you people to realize that your mandate is over and it's time you called an election.

Mr Stockwell: This is getting to be a yearly occurrence debating a couple of things, actually. Probably the longest in wide-ranging debates that we've had here are closure motions and extension of sitting. It's always somewhat curious, I find, that in the same session where we extend the sittings and the House leader du jour stands up and makes these outrageous comments—

Mr Wiseman: You are so bilingual you ought to run for leader.

Mr Stockwell: Look, I've got Mr Durham here, Mr Dump, and you know, I think if you want to get rid of him, I'll count 19 as a quorum. It's okay.

It's always interesting that we have the House leader who stands up and suggests to us on the opposite side of the House that we are being obstructionists, we're slowing down important pieces of legislation. It's also the same person who hadn't called the House back for two weeks later than he could have who's telling us we're being obstructionists and we're slowing the process down.

Well, the debate's what happened last year, and I think our House leader at the time, the same person—which is kind of unusual for this government, to see the same person in the same job year after year after year. We save a lot of money, actually, when they don't have to shave the names off the doors. They've gone through hundreds of thousands of dollars in cabinet appointments.

1650

The point that was made: As a caucus this session, I could say from the caucus meetings I've attended that there's not been one debate or discussion in our caucus about obstructing any piece of legislation. There's not been one debate this session about how we're going to slow down the process. There's not been one debate this session about how we want to take this piece of legislation and string out the time so they can't get it passed.

Hon Mr Wildman: It is just understood.

Mr Stockwell: The Minister of Environment, the tieless lounge singer who we have here today, says it's just understood, but you know, that's just not the case this time. We have not, in fact, strung out any debate at any time—

Hon Mr Wildman: I will sing my next interjection.

Mr Stockwell: I'm sure he's going to break into Feelings any moment now; I'll be ready for that—nor at any time have we ever obstructed any piece of legislation that came before this House.

I say that quite openly. Why? Because really we haven't had any piece of legislation come before this House this session that was worth any serious, lengthy debate. The only three you could have had some debate on this session, and I say very openly across the floor to the snoozing members, were (1) the budget, (2) maybe Sunday shopping and (3) your auto insurance. What happened with those three reasonably contentious pieces of legislation? One, the budget, you didn't debate, and the other two you moved closure on.

Now we have the House leader for the government side standing up in glory, crowing about the fact that for third readings, we average some minutes more than previous governments.

Mr Wiseman: Some? Some hours.

Mr Stockwell: Maybe more so, but I'm going to get to that point, the member from dumps. We average more time on a debate on third reading than the average generally was in previous years.

That may well be true, but beyond that point, there has not been a lot of restrictive debate on the opposition benches in hopes of delaying or postponing legislation, and I say that candidly and very openly to the few members of the socialist, democratic, unionist, conservative, liberal government before us.

Why is it that there's been some kind of prolonged debate on third reading? I say to the member from Durham, if you listen up, I'll tell you. The reason we have a prolonged debate on third reading, and we've had more prolonged debate on third reading, is because the process is set up. On first reading, it's simply passed and printed, and I think mostly that's been accepted. On second reading, we, as a Legislature, debate the principle, the content of the legislation that's presented to us, and there has been some healthy, sometimes long-

winded debate, I will admit, but generally some healthy, reasoned debate.

Third reading comes after the committees meet and amendments are made and committee of the whole has met. On third reading, I say again to the member from Durham, the debate takes place on amendments to bills. Now, I make one simple example. Third reading on the advocacy legislation contained 250 changes. Those weren't debated on the second reading.

Mr Wiseman: Most of them were word changes, and you know it.

Mr Stockwell: Well, word changes. Some of them were word changes, but a lot of—

Mr Wiseman: Most of them were word changes.

Mr Stockwell: Even most, but there was a substantial number of substantive changes to that piece of legislation.

Mr Wiseman: You change one word in one section and you have to change it in the other places.

Mr Stockwell: So, Mr Speaker, through you to the ex-member from Durham, I say to him we have that many substantive changes. The only opportunity—

Mr Wiseman: Not substantive and you know it.

Mr Stockwell: The member is suggesting up to 250 changes on the advocacy piece of legislation. Most of them were word changes and lots of them were terribly insignificant, I will admit that, but there were a considerable number—50, 60, 70—of major changes to the piece of legislation. So where is the opportunity for opposition parties to debate amendments when you change it from second to third reading? Of course, it's at third reading.

We on the opposition benches stand up hopefully and have an opportunity to debate dramatic changes, 250 in some instances, to a major piece of legislation, and what does this government do? They move closure on third reading.

Now this government stands today, two weeks late back, always two weeks late back; it comes back and complains that the opposition benches take up some time debating third reading on legislation that has changed dramatically when they figured out what they were doing. So that's a very simple parliamentary system that allows opposition parties to comment on amendments of government bills.

Let's talk about this government. This government hasn't truly, I don't think, ever come to grips with what its plan, its agenda is. I remember vividly sitting in this place back in 1991 when the Minister of Finance, the member from Never Never Land, brought in his legislation for his first budget. He brought in his first budget and his whole thrust of that first budget was, "We're going to fight the recession, not the deficit." Then he brought in this recent budget and his thrust was—

Mr Wiseman: The federal Tories spent the UIC.

Mr Stockwell: See, he doesn't even know what I'm going to say and he's already commenting.

Then his second budget was, "We're going to fight the recession." So in essence he began with fighting the recession, not the deficit, then he's fighting the recession. Now this government is doing nothing but simply fighting among itself. They've forgotten the deficit and they've forgotten the recession.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): They also forgot the brothers and sisters who elected them.

Mr Stockwell: That's more than true.

They're having people leave their caucus. They've got Mr Kormos and Mr Morrow travelling the province outlining their problems with this government in no uncertain terms. They've got a deputy minister—no, not a deputy, a Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Health who stepped down and they really have not got a concrete plan.

I think if two or three years ago you had told those people who had worked for this party for a number of years—I always recall that for a number of years they worked for them and they always said: "If we just get into power, boy, things would be good. Things would be good in Ontario if you just let us get elected."

If two years ago you had told the rank-and-file union representatives or the Sid Ryans or Liz Barkleys of the world that this government would be introducing the most draconian, far-reaching piece of legislation that would reopen collective agreements, claw back wages, lay people off, I think they would have looked at you like you had two heads.

Now today, with a legislative agenda that is empty for the first four or five weeks, we're back here. The cornerstone of this government's mandate now is, "We want to reopen 9,000 collective agreements and claw back wages that have been negotiated," negotiated in some cases by the very people who sit opposite us today. They sat in and negotiated these settlements, and through a stroke of rationalization second to none, they sit here and say, "We must do it because we have no more principles." That's their defence.

Their legislative agenda now, from now on in, will probably be dominated by the social contract, the social contract they spent eight weeks not achieving, the same social contract that their Premier said if it wasn't accepted by the Sid Ryans, Liz Barkleys et al, they would in fact lose 30,000 or 40,000 jobs, the same social contract that goes about stripping contracts, rolling back wages, laying people off, from social democrat union supporters, all for the price of an MPP's salary and probably a parliamentary assistant's stipend. That's what we have now sitting in the province of Ontario representing the viewpoints of the trade unionists around this province.

If this government wants to try and blame this fiasco of a government on the opposition members, we have broad shoulders. If this government doesn't want to take responsibility for the actions it takes, if this government doesn't want to take responsibility for the recession, if this government doesn't want to take the responsibility that governments take when they're in power and trying to lead provinces out of recessions, then we do have broad shoulders. We have broad shoulders.

1700

Mr Wiseman: Hey, look how far Ernie tried to distance himself from your Tory counterparts: "We are provincial Tories, not federal Tories."

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Have you called Steve Langdon lately? What did he say about the federal New Democrats? You only need to say to any federal New Democrat two words: Bob Rae. Two words and they curl up. Don't talk about your federal counterparts; they don't even want to know Bob Rae.

Mr Stockwell: We accept the fact that they've pointed so many fingers. They've pointed fingers at unions, they've pointed fingers at business, they've pointed fingers at each other. There's no one left to point the fingers at but us. We have broad shoulders. If we have to accept the responsibility for the incompetence of this government, to try and prop it up and re-create a province that it took over in 1990, we'll have to do our best for the benefit of the people of the province of Ontario.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Oakville South.

Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, what about the member from Durham? You'd think if there were one member who wouldn't have much to say, it would be the member from Durham, who got elected on the proviso that there would be no dumps in Durham.

Mr Wiseman: That's not true.

Mr Stockwell: Now he says: "It's not true. I didn't get elected on that proviso." We'll let the people of Durham speak, as they will speak in 1995, and with resounding clarity. We'll find out exactly what they think of the member from Durham and his five dump sites. I'll let the people of Durham decide the fate of this member, because I think they'll handle it in a very upfront and unemotional fashion.

We now are left in this situation, the situation of having to listen to this House leader—and I've known three House leaders now. The member from Sudbury was the original, then the member from Windsor went in and tried to do the job and now they've got the refrigerator salesman from Hamilton who is now House leader. He's a very successful refrigerator salesman because he doesn't charge any money for his fridges. That really goes a long way to saying, "Buy high and sell low."

We hear the member opposite, the House leader for the governing party, stand up and extol the tremendous pressure this government's under to get its legislation through, so I reviewed what legislation they needed. This legislation they have to have—they can't sleep at night unless this legislation is passed; they can't do their jobs or function or meet with constituents without having this legislation—we didn't see most of it until not much more than a couple of weeks ago. All this "got to be," "have to have," "need to know," they didn't know they needed this until a couple of weeks ago when we'd been sitting for four or five weeks, because they've been preoccupied with ensuring that the social contract failed.

Now it's the opposition's fault because they don't know what they want. I've often said in this House, "If you just tell us what you want, we'll be even more uncooperative," so they've taken us to point. We sit here and every day is a new occurrence, every day amazes me even more than the one before. Today or yesterday we hear from the Minister of Finance, the member from Never Never Land, that he is in fact introducing legislation that, under the guise of a social contract, has words like—

Mr Murdoch: Clawback.

Mr Stockwell: No, he doesn't use those words. He uses words like "compensation adjustments." Isn't that lovely? You go to the employee and you say, "I'm sorry, but we're going to have to do some"—no, you don't say "I'm sorry," because you hope they don't know what compensation adjustment means. You say, "We're going to do some compensation adjustments." The employee says, "Well, okay," and you say, "That means you get a pay reduction of 5%." Then they're going to have the—I'm tempted to say "notwithstanding" clause, but it's not that. It's the—help me.

Mr Murdoch: The exit?

Mr Stockwell: Yes, the early exit clause: "You're fired."

Mr Carr: And the pay pauses.

Mr Stockwell: The pay pause day is, "You're getting a 5% rollback." What is the last clause they have, the emergency clause? I forget the name of that one.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, I'm trying to ask for some general assistance from the members here.

Mr Carr: The fail-safe.

Mr Stockwell: The fail-safe is basically just reopening every collective agreement in the province of Ontario and stripping it, while people sleep at night. That's the fail-safe clause. This is what we've got: We've reduced this socialist government from the socialist bastions of this province, the Windsors, the Hamiltons, into a pale imitation of Conrad Black. That's

what this socialist government has been reduced to: wage-stripping.

I'm glad the Minister of Labour walked in, because I recall vividly the old Legislature. I'd watch the news and I'd see the very vocal and vociferous and argumentative and obstructionist member from Hamilton who is the Minister of Labour, who would stand screaming at the top of his lungs about any and every piece of labour legislation that was ever on the books, opposing anything that any government ever did.

Mr Murdoch: That's when he believed in unions.

Mr Stockwell: Union born and raised. A union man who was bred for many years to take the mantle of power in this government on labour is now the member who is going to support reopening 8,000 collective agreements—I look him directly in the eye—8,000 collective agreements, and clawing back increases, clawing them back, and looking for pay pause days, for rollbacks of 5%. I wonder, in his heart of hearts, how he squares this with his tyrannical rages he went on in opposition, how he squares this with the constituents who elected him, how he squares this with his union brothers and sisters, how he squares it with them that now this socialist government considers acceptable to reopen 8,000 collective agreements and roll back wages and lay off union people.

I ask that question of the Minister of Labour: How do you square that in your own mind and everything you've stood for the past 40 years? Is it all up in smoke? Is it all gone for the price of one cabinet position and a chauffeur-driven car? That's what it comes down to: the price of a cabinet post and a chauffeur-driven limousine.

As I sit on this side of the House, I don't feel any sense of sorrow for this group, because I think they've made their own bed. They set expectations far too high. They wrote *An Agenda for People*. They simply opposed reasonable legislation without really giving it a lot of consideration. In fact, they probably made their bed and now they've got to lie in it. I look across the floor at the Minister of—it used to be Industry, Trade and Technology—

Mr Carr: Economic Development.

Mr Stockwell: Economic Development, which is sort of an oxymoron in this province these days, but Economic Development. I know full well that she, in her other life, used to negotiate contracts. I suppose you're probably going to be very instrumental in reopening collective agreements that you negotiated for your brothers and sisters in the unions. It's very ironic that on one side of the table in one year, you could negotiate collective agreements that you think are fair and reasonable and should never be touched, and not but two years or three years later, sit on the other side of the table and dismantle all those things that you collectively negotiated in your other life.

I guess somebody someplace could rationalize that kind of thinking. I guess somebody someplace could give you some thought as to how the Minister of Economic Development and the Minister of Labour could rationalize that in their minds. I'm not sure I know, I'm not sure their union brothers and sisters will buy it, but I'd just like to know how they square it in their own minds that they can in fact negotiate collective agreements for their brothers and sisters and a mere two or three short years later dismantle those collective agreements to a greater extent than any other elected provincial body has in the history of this province.

Mr Murdoch: Just for a chauffeur-driven car and a minister's job.

Mr Stockwell: For a minister's portfolio and a chauffeur-driven limousine.

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): So are we sitting till midnight or what?

Mr Stockwell: Yes, we're going to sit, to answer my friend from Kitchener, I believe, the motorcycling member. To answer his question, yes, we'll probably be sitting till midnight. We're sitting till midnight, I'm quite certain, because in effect you've manhandled this particular session; you've mishandled the social contract; you've thoroughly messed up on all the legislation you had hoped to address this session; you moved closure on probably two of the most important pieces of legislation we're going to deal with this session; you allowed no debate on the budget. And you're going to extend the sittings because we've been obstructionist?

1710

Mr Murdoch: It's our fault again.

Mr Stockwell: It's our fault that this legislation is working slowly. I don't know what they expected. I'm not sure what they expected. Of the most contentious issues that you brought forward to this Legislature you moved closure on two of them, so how could we have obstructed a closure motion? On the other one, the budget, you allowed no debate, so how could we obstruct a non-debatable issue?

I'd like to know from the House leader of the government side exactly what we were doing this session that was slowing you down to such a degree that you couldn't get your agenda passed. What bill did we hold up? What legislation did we hold up from you? What bill did we speak to too long? What bill was it? The only bills we've debated in the last week or two were closure motions and extension motions, yet apparently we're obstructing the work of this government.

I always like to get in on these because I get to make my points about the new social contract and the reopening of the labour legislation. It's kind of nice, after all those years of listening to the New Democrats when they weren't in power and how responsible they were with their 20-second glib responses to complicated

answers—the member from Hamilton, the Minister of Labour, I think outlined a few glib responses for 20-second clips that absolutely held no water—to see them in this very awkward situation.

I see my friend up there, the ex-Minister of Education, now Minister of Community and Social Services—as chairman of the Toronto board of education it was always interesting to read his quotes in the newspapers about the responsible level of provincial governments in 60% funding and the funding process that took place, and to see him here today trying to rationalize or square that with his educational deep-thinking academic friends,—I wonder how those dinner parties are going these days. Certainly the heat from that room must be up a few degrees as my friend Mr Silipo tries to defend government decisions which he absolutely opposed in his other life as what I would consider a principled, honourable municipal official.

It's also interesting to see the member sitting beside him. She has a very interesting track record, as well, as a member of the city of Toronto council, and she used to take some interesting positions. I remember her position on casino gambling at the CNE. That was a very clear and honourable thing she did. She was opposed, but now as the minister she seems to have found a new life, much to the chagrin, I'm sure, of the Minister of Natural Resources, who took a great deal of time in his life to write a paper, a book in fact, on why legalized gambling shouldn't happen and the terrible crime rates and the awful things that would take place. He must have talked to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations because she used to agree with you, and at some point you two must have absolutely gone to bed thinking one way, woken up the next day and then thoroughly rationalized everything you've ever stood for.

Of course, that happens in politics. It's never usually quite as obvious as that. There's usually a process that takes place where they change their mind, but this government seems to change its mind more often than its socks.

Mr Murdoch: Just for a car and a portfolio. How easy it is to buy people off.

Mr Stockwell: Someone may say, that issue itself is debatable. We have an interesting time ahead of us, the period of time when the member for Fort York will come in here and strip 8,000 contracts and roll back wages. That will be of interest. It will be of interest to all the union representatives that you used to call your brothers and sisters, your friends, the great unwashed out there that you looked after.

We in opposition will have a very difficult decision because we see you going down a very useless track trying to get a social contract with 8,000 partners and trying to recapture \$2 billion, which you can't, to prop up a budget that is totally and thoroughly and financial-

ly without merit, and watching the \$25 billion you've added to the debt blossom, watching your party executive taking shots at you from the side as well as your union friends and the general public as a whole, watching your general popularity drop below the fringe party status in most ridings, and watching you rationalize or square all these positions in your own mind for the sake of an MPP's salary or a cabinet minister's and a car. If it weren't so sad to see this lot, you'd cry to see people and see how far they've fallen from this pedestal that they built for themselves.

We will sit till midnight and we'll hear, chapter and verse, the members opposite rhyme off the total rationalization that they're going to give to the social contract, the total rationalization they're going to give to Sunday shopping, the rationalizing that they're going to do on casino gambling. We're going to watch as they slowly shrink beneath the seats, beneath their desks, as they absolutely and completely sell their souls and principles for the sake of a cabinet minister's salary and a car.

I'm voting in favour of this extension of hours because I can't think of anywhere I'd rather be than to watch 74 or 71 or 66 members opposite, whatever the number may end up being, shrink into a complete bag of nerves as their constituents, their union friends, their brothers and sisters, those opposed to Sunday shopping, those in Windsor against casino gambling, each take their pound of flesh and cart it out the front door, and see them slowly evaporate before my very eyes till midnight, every night for the next few weeks. I'll be here and it'll be exciting.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Charlton moves that notwithstanding standing order 9, the House shall continue to meet from 6 pm to 12 midnight on June 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23 and 24, 1993, at which time the Speaker shall adjourn the House without motion until the next sessional day. Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. I declare the motion carried.

RETAIL BUSINESS HOLIDAYS
AMENDMENT ACT (SUNDAY SHOPPING), 1993
LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES JOURS
FÉRIÉS DANS LE COMMERCE DE DÉTAIL
(OUVERTURE DES COMMERCE LE DIMANCHE)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail en ce qui concerne l'ouverture des commerces le dimanche.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): I believe the last time we debated that issue, the member

for Durham-York had the floor. If not, I will recognize the member for St David.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I am pleased to be able to speak in favour of the bill to provide for Sunday shopping. I want to say in preface that in our caucus we're providing, like in the government caucus, a free vote. There are differing views among members on that issue, which I think is interesting, because it reflects to some degree the legislation passed when the Liberal Party was government, which was a local option. In a sense, I suppose, a free vote reflects that principle, at least in part, although not quite all the way.

I stand in support of it, at least in part, because I think the public views it as already passed. I remember campaigning in the by-election in my riding of St George-St David, and every Sunday there'd be a lineup at noon outside the No Frills store just down from the campaign office, now the constituency office, on Parliament Street in the great riding of St George-St David. The people would be lined up there, ready to go into the store. It would provide a great opportunity for me to meet a lot of voters at one time. I thank the government for that opportunity, because it paid off in the by-election.

There are many other stores in the riding where that same thing happens. I can think of Mr Grocer at 155 Sherbourne and the Dominion store and Loblaws in St Jamestown, where people are provided with the opportunity to shop on Sundays, and I think they appreciate it.

I think they like it because of the convenience of the opportunity. Frankly, I think it's a modern thing to do. When I say "modern," I know that picks up a bit on the debate that happened on the bill in 1988 and 1989 under the Liberal government of the day, but I think it is a sense of the growing modernity of the province and of the acceptance in our province of newer notions as we move from old blue Ontario into perhaps at least a red Ontario.

1720

I do have some concerns, however, and one of them I think does relate to what the then leader of the third party, now Premier, expressed at the time, which was a common pause day. I think about the concern about a commercialization of Sunday, of that move away from the allowing of a common pause, of the sense of family, of people being able to gather together in other than a commercial environment. There is, no doubt, a tradeoff that has to be made between that commercial interest and the family interest, and I think that this bill, while allowing the accommodation to the interest of those who wish to shop and provide the convenience of shopping on a Sunday, may not go all the way in protecting that other interest.

I know that my friend the co-critic for the Solicitor

General, Mr Chiarelli, is proposing an amendment to hours, and I think there is some logic to that, and I'll speak about that in due course.

My other concern relates to corner store operators. I know during the campaign in St George-St David one of the issues that came up was the concerns of many corner store owners, including the Ontario Korean Businessmen's Association, about the impact of Sunday shopping on the corner store operations. One of the things that I am concerned about is that impact as well.

I hope the government, in the course of dealing with this bill, will also think about those corner store operators, because I think the impact can be quite detrimental to what might be called the mom-and-pop stores of people who have come to this country and sacrificed a lot to be able to start up a business and send their children off to college to a better life. They see those prospects dimming and the prospects, frankly, for their children dimming. So I hope that some consideration will be given by the government in that regard.

Now, as I said in the beginning, one of the issues that was related to the free vote was the idea of local option. That was provided for in the initial bill before it got changed to no Sunday shopping at all and now changed back to free and wide-open Sunday shopping. But I think there was a workable concept in local option, and I think if left alone we could have survived with that.

I think the experience with a court challenge to Sunday shopping, which provided that window of some eight or nine months of Sunday shopping, would have allowed people to become comfortable with the idea and allowed the opportunity, frankly, for municipalities to make a decision that was workable in their own environment.

I would be remiss in that regard if I didn't quote from my predecessor in this seat in the riding of St George-St David, the then Attorney General Mr Ian Scott, who, when introducing the legislation at the time, in April 1988, said about local option, and I quote:

"This change recognizes the value of community autonomy and local choice in the matter of regulating Sunday and holiday shopping. Ontario is a vast and diverse province. The regulation of store openings must be sensitive to this diversity and recognize the differences among communities. The government's proposal will provide communities with the freedom to choose for themselves."

I think that's an important principle and one that could have been reflected in the existing law if this current government hadn't decided to change its mind and then change its mind again. In fact, that tradition of a local option carries a long and weighty authority going back to Premier Leslie Frost in the 1940s and 1950s, who was a great proponent of the local option.

I want to return to the concept of hours of opening on

Sunday. As it stands now, some of the research that I've conducted and others have conducted on my behalf indicates that the municipalities may not have the authority on a Sunday to regulate hours of opening if your municipality has the desire, for example, to say stores should not open until noon on a Sunday to provide maybe not a common pause day but a common pause half-day. I think there's some virtue to allowing municipalities the option to do that, to regulate.

Now I'm not sure that I think it needs to be that we change the definition of "Sunday" for holiday purposes to start at noon, but I think there should be some recognition of a municipality's right to do that. I'm not sure—I believe it's section 214 in the Municipal Act—that it has the authority in it for municipalities to provide that regulation, and I hope the government will consider that possibility as this bill works its way through.

Now, I said too that I thought there was some sort of sadness to the process of wide-open Sunday shopping because it is that commercialization. In that regard, I did actually bring a quote, a poem written by F. R. Scott ages ago, that I thought sort of reflects a bit of that shock. It was written in 1967, and I know the members will appreciate that. It's called National Identity. It's in a fine book called *The Blasted Pine*, which I recommend to many members. It says:

The Canadian Centenary Council
Meeting in Le Reine Elizabeth
To seek those symbols
Which will explain ourselves to ourselves
Evoke unlimited responses
And prove that something called Canada
Really exists in the hearts of all
Handed out to every delegate
At the start of proceedings
A portfolio of documents
On the cover of which appeared
In gold letters
not
A Mari Usque Ad Mare
not
Dieu Et Mon Droit
not
Je Me Souviens
not
E Pluribus Unum
but

COURTESY OF COCA-COLA LIMITED.

I think it's that same sense of commercialization that Frank Scott is trying to achieve that causes me some concern about Sunday and why I think municipalities

should be given the option to regulate hours, to provide some sense of pause, at least to perhaps noon.

I was in the Mr Grocer at 155 Sherbourne in my riding on Sunday, in fact when I was doing a little Sunday shopping, talking to one of the clerks there who had to work from 10 to 5 on Sunday who was not paid any kind of overtime, just straight-time pay. That's making Sunday a regular day, and I think there is a certain loss in that regard. We should be able to provide municipalities the option to deal with that situation.

I also have a concern, and I hope the government will look at its own report that it commissioned at the time that it was proceeding with this bill with respect to worker protection and other matters. I have some concern about the issue of worker protection on Sunday.

I recall the debate at the time in 1988 and 1989. The then leader of the third party, now Premier, and others in that party were of the view, frankly, that they thought no protection would be sufficient for workers on Sunday. I suppose I share some of that concern but, that being said, some recommendations were made by this committee, and I hope the government will heed them.

I think there are really two issues. The way the amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act works I think is going to leave some patchwork quilts related to tourist exemptions and statutory holidays. I think the government should look at how that's going to operate.

For example, recommendation 7 from the working group talks about the confusion and concern regarding the enforcement of the provisions in the RBHA as it applies to those statutory holidays. Employers, for example, have complained that illegal openings on statutory holidays create competitive disadvantages, and I think there is some credit to that argument; owner-operators believe these holidays are one of the few competitive edges they have over large retailers; there are labour concerns, and I think valid ones, about the continuing erosion of workers' rights, as they are required to work on statutory holidays.

I hope the government's going to act on the issue, because I'm concerned about workers too, having in the course of my life worked as a clerk in a Dominion store, when I turned 16 until I was 19. At \$2.35 an hour I know the value of Sundays and the occasional opportunity to work overtime, because at that amount of pay, I could work 40 hours and not earn \$100, which wasn't a lot of money. But I hope the government will take heed of its own recommendation and give some protection.

In that regard, with respect to the amendment—and I realize this may be some discussion that's more appropriate at a more detailed stage—I'm just wondering if the minister or the Solicitor General would take a look, or have his officials take a look, at section 5 of the Retail Business Holidays Act in connection with the

impact of his amendment. I'm not sure on the face of it how it's going to work where you're now providing Sunday shopping, and yet section 5 says notwithstanding, you can open on Sunday if you're closed on another day a week.

It may end up being a redundant section, depending on how it relates to the operation of the tourist exemption but, on its face, it's unclear how it's going to operate. He may want his officials to look at how that impacts. Having practised law for a while, I find judges and lawyers are often frustrated with redundant sections in legislation. My interpretation may be incorrect; that's been known to happen in legal circles from time to time, but I hope you'll do me that favour.

1730

I also have some concerns regarding the process by which we have ended up with Sunday shopping. I think there is a certain—I hesitate to use the word—arrogance in that process, because we have Sunday shopping now, yet we don't have a bill passed, enacted and proclaimed that permits that Sunday shopping.

While I support the principle, I believe in the importance of this institution. I was recently elected to uphold, I think, the principles of this institution, and I'm concerned very much by the idea of enforcing a law prior to its passage, especially in the context of a free vote on a bill when the government isn't ensuring that its majority will pass that bill.

I frankly think there is a form of contempt of the House in that. I'm doing some further research on that and I hope to be able to raise a point in that regard, but I do think there is a contempt of the House. That is one of the symptoms of the arrogance with which this bill has been proceeded, and that concerns me. I don't mean to lay that blame on the shoulders of the current Solicitor General. He has inherited that problem to some degree, but it is none the less the government of which he is a part that is proceeding in that way, and it does cause me concern.

That comes from one of his predecessors, in any event, the previous Solicitor General, the Honourable Allan Pilkey at that time, who I think is in another capacity currently, still honourable but in another capacity. He said at the time the bill was introduced that he would ask the officials of his ministry to inform police services across the province of the introduction of these amendments and that measures would be retroactive to the day of the introduction of the bill, June 3, 1992.

It strikes me that there's a certain, as I said, arrogance in that, because it's usurping the functions of this institution to tell police forces not to enforce the law on the books. It places police forces, crown attorneys and others in a difficult position. I know the Solicitor General would be concerned about that too, because there may be ways in which a government can abuse

that authority to tell police to be selective in their enforcement of the law. I'm not saying that this Solicitor General will do it, but I think it's a principle that matters. I am concerned about that and I think that does fit with the context of a free vote on this bill, because there is no guarantee of passage.

Again, from Hansard at the time of the introduction of the bill, the Premier stood up and gave the statement, I suppose, because it was an important issue to the government at the time. He said, "I want to make it clear that the vote on the legislation, while it has the full support of the cabinet, will be a free vote in the Legislature for my own caucus, of course." It was nice of him to allow the others that opportunity to make up their own mind. But it was a free vote and there's no guarantee of passage. That does concern me.

I raised a point of privilege in the House at the reasonable first opportunity in that regard, and upon consideration I think it's more than a privilege point. It is a contempt of the House point. I hope to be able to raise that again with the Speaker. I intend to do so, because I think it offends that principle of the responsibility of the executive branch of government to the legislative branch of government, one that dates back as far as the Durham report in 1837, and a principle for which people in this province even fought.

Rumour has it that some of my relatives at one point at least intended to fight for that principle, although leaving Mount St Louis, north of Barrie, the story is that they got diverted at a tavern at about Bond Head and never quite made it down to Toronto for the rebellion, but that could be just family lore. I of course mean no disrespect to my predecessors by telling that story.

But I do want to quote from Durham's report at that time, because it's a principle that I think is important and one that members in this House often forget. "But the crown must, on the other hand, submit to the necessary consequences of representative institutions, and if it has to carry on the government in unison with the representative body, it must consent to carry it on by means of those in whom that representative body has confidence."

My concern is that by enforcing legislation prior to using the means by which that confidence has been placed in the executive, it is in contempt of the House.

The second way in which I am concerned about the process by which this bill has come to the position really relates to the rhetoric that was involved at the time of the debate on the previous, predecessor bill in 1989. The then Leader of the Opposition, now Premier, used quite extensive and expansive rhetoric in criticizing the then Liberal government about Sunday shopping and about expanding it and was quite effusive in his praise for his own position about a common pause day.

I understand that times change and circumstances change and the Court of Appeal, or at least the Divisional Court, in ruling initially that the Sunday shopping law contravened the charter, provided that opportunity for people to have an experience, and I can understand how that experience can change people's minds and I don't frankly take as much criticism with the government for coming to some degree to its senses.

What I do take issue with is, again, an issue related to this institution and the role of the members in it. I think the level of public disenchantment, frankly, with politicians and the political process really in part, in any event, comes from that concern of the public when they look at this institution, when they look at politicians, when they look at people speaking and they hear rhetoric, they hear the line being drawn in the sand and people saying, "You cannot step across this line or else things will come tumbling down," on issues that may not be of the most fundamental importance, or even if they are, they draw the line in the sand.

I think far too often we draw that line and say, "No further," as politicians, and this happens to some degree in all parties, and then none the less we erase that line and move it a little bit back, and then erase it and move it a little bit back. The public sees that and I think their level of distrust with politicians increases.

I think there's a bit of a lesson in how the rhetoric was used in relation to this bill, a lesson for all of us in how that can increase the disenchantment, because I think the current Premier's rhetoric at the time was quite expansive and he was very critical of the then Attorney General, my predecessor in the riding of St George-St David, who I'm proud to have at least succeeded, if not replaced.

I'd like to read a little bit from what the Premier said at that time to give a sense of how high the rhetoric was, so that we get a sense of how that can build up an expectation, which when it gets shattered, leads to further disenchantment with the political process.

For example, in I believe it was the second reading debate, the then Leader of the Opposition, now Premier, said, "Let's at least have the honesty to recognize that in our society people who have to work on a Sunday are giving up something a little different from people who have to work on a Thursday or Friday." I don't disagree with that notion. There is some truth to that.

He goes on, "The first argument I hear," in favour of the principle of Sunday opening, "that it is modern, that it is contemporary, that it is commercially successful, that it is the way to go and that it is the way the world is working seven days a week, 24 hours a day. 'Let's keep the stores going. Let's keep them open. Let's keep all those options available. Let's give that right to the individual to shop whenever he or she wants.'

"I must confess I do not regard that as a contempor-

ary or a particularly modern notion. There is nothing contemporary or modern about it. It is, if I may say so, a very old-fashioned, commercial Victorian idea that people should be working 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is not a modern doctrine at all. It is a very old-fashioned doctrine and a very vicious doctrine."

Then he goes on, "The first thing I want to say is when members of the Liberal Party talk about modernity, all I can say is if that is their vision of the noble city, they can have it, it is theirs. They can flog that commercial doctrine, that it is somehow trendy and contemporary to work 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. I will say, quite frankly, I do not regard it as restful to go shopping with my family."

I don't want to speak about the Premier's family, but it's sometimes restful to go shopping with mine.

He goes on to say, "If we can provide convenience for people, great, let's provide convenience, but not at the expense of this notion, this idea of a common day of rest, of a common day of pause."

1740

So there it is, the rhetoric of clear drawing the line in the sand.

It goes on to say much the same thing again:

"That public policy is a law that says that, as much as possible, Sunday should be a common day of rest, a common day of pause for the working people of this province, and the provincial laws should be designed to implement that desire and that goal of public policy. That means that our labour laws, our commercial laws and our retail shopping laws should all reflect that view."

The Premier continued on in that same vein, in both of the official languages of this country, although not quite of this province. He said:

"They were in favour"—talking at that point about my party, the Liberal Party—"of a common pause day before the election in 1987. They said they agreed with the approach to a common pause day in 1987. I'm not talking about 1787 or 1887. I'm not talking about a Liberal Party that is totally different from the one we see before us. I'm talking about people who are still members of this House.

"I'm talking about the most remarkable transformation. Since the transformation of Cinderella, we have seen none equivalent to that which took place in the heart of the member for London South. When she was a member of her party and her caucus, she was in favour of a common pause day. Give her the coach and the carriage and the footmen, and my God, it is all changed. Make her a minister and suddenly the opinions are totally different. She is given the job of ramming this legislation through the House and not listening to what the people are saying."

He goes on to reinforce that same rhetoric, in the

other official language of this country, saying, «Mon deuxième point, qui est fondamental : si le gouvernement veut vraiment protéger ceux qui travaillent dans le monde du commerce, dans les magasins et dans les boutiques de notre province, la meilleure législation possible est de garantir que ces magasins resteront fermés le dimanche.»

What is clear is that we have a rhetoric of drawing the line in the sand, a rhetoric of principle, a rhetoric of high-mindedness. While I think that is appropriate and has its place and I think it's important that the public see politicians take those stands because I think the public wants to see politicians be principled, the problem I have is that when that kind of rhetoric is used in the context of issues that may not require it, where circumstances may not need that kind of rhetoric, and then politicians turn around and change their mind, then it just brings all of us down, not just the government party, not even just the third party, but all of us in this institution.

That is the second manner in which I'm concerned about the way this bill has proceeded, in the broader sense. I do think it, unfortunately, has spoken to the irrelevance of this institution on occasion, both in terms of the rhetoric and in terms of the fact that there's an enforcement of the bill prior to its passage.

When I look in this House and see some empty seats, and I think about the people who might be watching at home—

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): No, you turned them off. The natives have turned off their TV sets.

Mr Murphy: The member from Markham says they were turned off. Well, I dare say I don't wish to rival his oratorical excellence in doing that. I'm sure some have turned off, but I hope some in the great riding of St George-St David have stayed tuned in and I hope they'll continue to stay tuned in for the last few minutes.

To go back to my point, I think there is concern that this institution is irrelevant, that the way it operates does not provide a forum for decision-making in this province. The way this bill has been proceeded with reinforces that impression, that what we do here doesn't matter, that decisions are made elsewhere, that they're made in government caucus or cabinet room, the opposition caucus room or the third party caucus room, and that this is really the theatre within which these decisions are played out—sometimes very bad theatre too, sometimes better than others. I won't make any particular point in that regard. I'm certain all will know who I talk about when I talk about bad theatre, and I wouldn't dare mention the member from Etobicoke West in that regard.

None the less, there's a sense that this is not an

institution of relevance to people, and I think that we, as politicians in all parties, have a responsibility to re-create the relevance of this institution, re-create the sense that their politicians are here not just in the packs that we call parties but as individuals representing their constituency, are here fighting for those interests, are here making decisions and not just participating in the theatre of this institution.

Sometimes, I see people speaking in this House and often there's a concern that it falls on deaf ears. I hope that's not the case. I don't claim to be the most articulate of speakers, but I hope the message is none the less getting through to all members of the House. It's important that we not be part of the continuing denigration of this institution, of the way in which we govern this province.

In summary, I support this legislation. I've identified some concerns for the Solicitor General. I have a great respect for his ability. I hope he will take those back to his officials and take a look at them. I am concerned too—and I hope he will respond to that concern—about the protection of workers and about convenience store operators.

I can remember in the by-election talking at the corner of Parliament and Wellesley to my friend who had, just a few days before I talked to him, gone to meet the Premier on the point of perhaps providing some way in which they could continue to survive. He was a member of the Ontario Korean business persons' association—there is a large Korean community in my riding—and I know that corner stores, for example, are one of the ways that community provides itself economic sustenance. I hope the government will do something for those members in our community.

There are other individuals, of course, operating corner stores. My riding has quite a few, along Parliament Street and Church Street and Yonge Street and Wellesley, and even the fine Summerhill Market. I'm concerned that those local places continue to thrive and grow, because they're an important part of my riding. I hope the government will assist in making sure they continue and thrive.

Thank you for allowing me to participate in the debate. That completes my remarks.

Mr Cousens: I'm pleased to make a few comments, if I may, on the presentation of the member from St David-St George. First of all, it's my first opportunity to have had a chance to be in the House for the duration when the honourable member has made his pitch. I haven't had a chance to publicly welcome Tim Murphy, the member for St David-St George, to the House. I think he is going to be a very good combatant, because it took him a long time to reach the conclusion I wanted to hear: what he was going to do.

He learned the art by being an intern years before:

You don't say all that much; you don't want to get caught, but you want to say enough that you can put something in your brochure if it comes out just right. He's going to be able to at least say to the people with corner stores and convenience stores on Yonge Street and Wellesley and Church and a few other parts of his riding that he's been in there fighting for them.

It might make a difference; it might not. It depends upon whether or not Mr Rae needs your support when it comes time for this, because there are enough New Democrats who may not be voting for it. But at least we've got another person that's going to support the New Democrats from the Liberal ranks.

I just wondered if you could comment on your own experience with the convenience store owners. How supportive are they of the Sunday shopping you're now supporting? I had a feeling that a number of the convenience store owners weren't too thrilled with this because it's impacting their business. Are you taking a different position from the convenience store owners in your riding? Certainly the ones up my way are quite concerned with someone supporting Sunday shopping if there's being nothing done by the government to help them survive the impact of what Sunday shopping is causing them.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further questions or comments? If not, do you wish to make further comments for two minutes?

Mr Murphy: Yes. I appreciate the intervention by the member for Markham who, through his many years as a member, has always been cogent and sometimes interesting. Well, maybe it's interesting and sometimes cogent; I'm not sure. Or maybe it's sometimes interesting and sometimes cogent, but always here. I'm sure the voters of Markham appreciate his presence. I appreciate his intervention.

It's fair to say that I can't speak for the convenience store owners in Markham. I can only speak for the convenience store owners in my riding, and I think I've made it clear that I want the government to do something to help out those convenience store owners in my riding.

1750

The member for Markham also talked about those members of the NDP caucus who may not be supporting this bill. I just want to say that I applaud—I believe I was here when the member for Yorkview and the member for Downsview stood in their seats and said, "I can't, in principle, vote for this." Let me say I commend them for that. I think that's a principled position and speaks to what I was talking about during the course of my remarks, which was that people want to see their politicians take a more principled stand. They have done that, and for that I give them credit.

In that regard, there was a motion back in May 1992

brought by my leader and at that time there were 15 or so members of the NDP who voted against the motion to provide Sunday shopping, quite a long list. I hope they too will stand by the principles that they espoused at the time and shared and that continue to be shared by the members for Yorkview and Downsview. I hope enough members come together to pass this legislation. I think that in truth the public is fed up with dealing with this issue any more and we should get on with it.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further debate? The member for Markham.

Mr Cousens: I'm going to participate in the debate on Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping. This is a bill that was brought forward by the New Democratic Party—the government, anyway—on June 3, 1992. That's just over a year from now that this was given first reading in the Legislature, and here, a year later, the government has so mismanaged its timetable on expediting legislation through this House that we're dealing with it a year later.

The least you can do, if you're going to bring in a new bill or a new law—I mean, we're dealing with a number of instances of this in this Legislature where the government, by decree, makes changes from previous laws and doesn't even bother to bring them to the Legislature so that we, who are responsible for giving debate and approval or turning them down, have a chance to do that.

I think there is some reason for concern within the New Democratic caucus that if they were to have the bill brought before the House and if both opposition parties were opposed to it, this bill would be defeated, because there are enough people around here who have great concerns with what Bill 38 is all about.

Mr Rae and the new Solicitor General have brought forward legislation which may or may not have the approval of this House. Doesn't that raise some questions about the propriety of the way this place is governed, that in fact the government can pretty much, under the auspices of the Premier and his cabinet, do what it wants and, at some point in its own good time, bring it to the House for consideration?

I'm not at all pleased that the government has procrastinated as long as it has on this subject, as it has with Bill 34 and Bill 36. There are other bills which are also being brought forward from last year, budget bills which should have been dealt with before the House prorogued at Christmas time. But not so; the government just continues to bring them forward.

I have to say shame on you, New Democrats, because it's just another instance of poor management of this Legislature and this House. This is another example of a classless act where you've had the law in effect since it was given first reading and now, if it's turned down,

you've got all those other people out there who wonder just how the system works.

I'd like to just comment briefly on how a government, when it is elected to office on the basis of certain promises, assurances, commitments and platform issues and then, when it's elected, changes its position on things.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): Surely not.

Mr Cousens: To the honourable Minister of Environment and Energy, I'd just like to point out that there are a number of examples of that with your government that really are causing many, many people great dismay. It's not only Sunday shopping where you've had a change in position; it has to do with the casino gambling, it has to do with government-owned or government-run automobile insurance, it has to do with the kind of statement made before the last election when your Premier, who was then Leader of the Opposition, in visiting Keele Valley landfill site, in visiting Britannia landfill, in visiting Whitevale, said, "On these sites, I will protect you. Nothing will happen here that is against the best interests of the community and the province and there will be no expansion of these sites. Nothing will happen without a full environmental assessment," and along shortly after that, when he's in power, brings forward Bill 143 and proceeds to break his own promises that he made prior to his election.

What I raise on this point is the issue, why don't we change the system, that if a government is elected to office based on a platform that they've established before they were elected, and when they're elected they find they have to change their position, instead of just doing it, they go back to the public, who voted for them, and ask for a referendum on those issues and let the public then determine whether or not they're going to allow the government to change that position?

I'm putting this forward as a suggestion for some consideration. It's an idea, because what we're dealing now is a breakdown of the parliamentary system. The public have entrusted the government of Ontario to the New Democrats, where 37% of the voters gave this government the power. It's a one-party government. They're in power for their term of office as long as they stay in office or until they lose a confidence vote, and when they're in office they can do as they will. So their promises before they were elected don't mean a thing. If they want to change it, they can change it.

I am only suggesting that the honourable Minister of Environment and Energy and all those people who serve in cabinet have the integrity to go back to the people and say, "All right, we're having a change of position on this"—

Hon Mr Wildman: Bill Davis never changed his mind?

Mr Cousens: —"and rather than our coming along and just doing an about-face"—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, order.

Mr Cousens: —"and rather than just come along and make what we said a perfect, full and complete lie, we are instead coming back to you to see that the public confirms what's going on."

So, Mr Speaker, if you want to pay attention to the honourable minister—I see I'm getting him rattled, or is that his head shaking? I'm not just sure. But the fact of the matter is, I believe that there is a tremendous need—

Hon Mr Wildman: Tell us about Bill Davis and Catholic school funding.

Mr Cousens: Mr Speaker, either you're going to control the honourable member—I'm not able to do that, I'm not Speaker, but the point I am trying to make—

Hon Mr Wildman: I am just putting it in a historical context.

Mr Cousens: I ask you, would you either shut him up or kick him out?

Mr Wildman, who is the Minister of Environment and Energy, is just constantly interrupting. Either you're in the chair, you're going to do something about his insolence, his bad manners, his lack of understanding, his dealing with the lies of government—and what I'm trying to say is there should be parliamentary reform that puts these people in a position that they're going to do something.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, order. Our remarks should not be made personal, please. You have the floor and I would ask the minister to make sure that you don't interject while the member is addressing the House. The member for Markham.

Mr Cousens: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Hon Mr Wildman: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I realize that all interjections are out of order but I just wanted to put it into some historical context in terms of the Davis government.

Mr Cousens: As we've seen on the whole subject of parliamentary reform, I'm suggesting, just to make the point again, that if the government has a change in position based on new findings, new information or their new polls—I mean, who knows how Mr Rae operates? It certainly hasn't been on the basis of principle, of what he said before he was elected. Once he's in there, he starts saying and doing what he wants and it's irrelevant as to what he said before he was elected.

I'm saying, in order to put some credibility in the system, let there be a way in which the public, having placed their trust in a government, can then, when the government changes its mind, changes its heart, for whatever reason, be gone back to and then there is some

way in which the public participates in the reversal of a decision. So the public can then say yes to a referendum or no to a referendum, because on the basis under which you were elected, you come along now and retroactively change things. It's wrong that you do that. You should seek public approval before you just come along and do that.

So the democracy that we have under the New Democrats is a lie because you say one thing to get elected and you do another thing once you're there. That's what so hypocritical about the New Democrats. The socialists of this province have become communistic. It's a one-party government and all you're trying to do is your own thing. There's no respect for the parliamentary process, and I say we—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Take your seat, please. Order. I would ask the member for Markham to address the Chair. Ignore the interjections, but address the Chair, and I'm sure that you'll prevent all those exchanges.

1800

Mr Cousens: What it makes you question is the way in which—

Hon Mr Wildman: Mr Speaker, point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Markham, would you please take your seat. On a point of order?

Hon Mr Wildman: Mr Speaker, I recognize that I inadvertently provoked the member, but I would ask you to ask the member to be more temperate and not to use the word "lie" or to accuse anyone in this House of being members of the Communist party.

The Deputy Speaker: You may be totally correct in your remarks, but I apologize, I did not hear what was said. If it was said, I'm sure the member for Markham would apologize and withdraw those remarks, if he has said so.

Mr Cousens: I wanted to comment on the remarks made by the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr Bob Rae, on June 16, 1988. What I'd like to point out is the hypocrisy of those statements with the kind of bill before us today. I would like to just put them back on the record. It's easier that you go, Wildman, because I think the ignorance that comes out from you guys—you can come along and do whatever you want—

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Markham, please take your seat.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Durham West, you have a point of order?

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Yes, I do. I'd like to recall a ruling that you made in this Legislature approximately two years ago on the use of the word "hypocrisy," and since the member from Markham has just used that word in reference to the current Premier

of the province—the ruling that you made at that time was that "hypocrisy" is a word that is not parliamentary in the context that it was used and it should not be used because it inflames the atmosphere of the House, which the member is obviously trying to do. Your ruling at that time—

The Deputy Speaker: Please take your seat. The ruling at that time was referring to a member. He was referring to an act, he was referring to a government. Therefore, I don't accept your point of order and I would ask the member for Markham once again to address your remarks to the Chair, please.

Mr Cousens: Thank you for your intervention, Mr Speaker. I appreciate it.

I'd like to draw to the attention of the House and put back on the record comments made by the then Leader of the Opposition, Bob Rae, when he was speaking on June 16, 1988, on Sunday shopping.

"What I want to suggest to the members of the Liberal Party is that they are not being very straightforward with themselves or the public in refusing to debate this issue as a question of what they think should happen." Here he was at that time being very, very critical of the Liberals and Joan Smith when they brought in the bills at that time.

He says: "I have a much more practical sense as to why this issue is important and why it has assumed the importance that it has. It is simply this. We live in a world where more and more people are having to work longer and longer hours in order to make ends meet."

He goes on to say, "For that reason, the pressure to work on a Sunday and the pressure to be away from the family is growing all the time." Part of his explanation on why he was opposed at that time to Sunday shopping.

Mr Rae went on to say: "Surely, if one genuinely wanted to be modern or contemporary, one would be talking about ways we can ensure that people should be working less....I believe profoundly that we should not only be talking about making Sunday a day of rest; we should be talking about making Saturday a day of rest."

Mr Rae at the same time, on the same day, June 16, 1988, when he had a very different position from the one that he brought forward last June when he brought in this bill—and people elected him on the basis of the positions that he'd enunciated very clearly before that, which are in Hansard, so that he had a position; it was a known position; it was part of the New Democratic position, because as leader, he had put this on the record.

He went on to say: "I think it is fair to say, as a matter of sociological fact, that municipal governments have been less successful in resisting the pressures of the marketplace on their political systems than other levels have been. I think that is just a fact of life."

He goes on to say:

"The third point I want to make is that the Liberals have argued that this law"—to make Sunday shopping available—"is more rational and that the current law cannot be enforced.

"That argument, if I may say so, is just about the stupidest argument I think I have heard from the lips of the Attorney General.

"I might add that this law,"—and again he's referring to the Liberal law at the time—"in its entire stupidity, also allows the municipalities to set the level of the fine for stores that are going to be deciding whether or not to comply with this legislation."

Mr Rae went on to say on June 16, 1988: "What I do not understand—it seems to me that my describing the law as stupid has had some problems in translation. I do not know whether that is the case.

"What I want to suggest is that the arguments that have been put forward by those in favour of this legislation"—for Sunday shopping—"just do not hold water if one is sincere in wanting to maintain a common day of rest in this province. For those who do not think that such a common day of rest is important, all I can say is that we have a very real difference of opinion and I think if we were to have a totally blind vote of members in this House on the question of whether there should be a common day of rest, I do not think there is any question we would win. I do not think there is any question about that."

So these again are further statements made by the then Leader of the Opposition, Bob Rae, on Sunday shopping. "I think they are making a mistake." That's what he's saying of the Liberals: "I think they are making a mistake. We intend to fight them on this issue. We intend to give the people an opportunity, through the hearings process, which will be going on this summer, to express themselves and to take those views to the committee."

Okay. He goes on and there's more in Hansard and I could quote more lines, but there are several pages of the debate at that time. That was the then Leader of the Opposition speaking out clearly and precisely and stating his position in opposition to Sunday shopping. Then he can come into the House after he's elected and change his position and that has to do with respect for the House and respect for the people who elected that person. They elected him on the basis that he would do certain things and when in his own good spirit, whatever the spirit is that moves him—he can come into this House and reverse and change those positions from what they were before.

I'm not opposed to the fact that he changed his mind. I'm opposed to the process that's being followed, the fact that he can come in this House elected on one set of terms of reference and then, without so much as an

apology, turn it around and change his position without giving the people that elected him any opportunity to reflect, to comment or to have any impact on what is happening in regard to that new decision.

He was elected for a combination of other reasons. He was elected in part because the Liberals had done such a deplorable job, and we can go into the history of what Mr Peterson was all about, but we can also say that there was a platform people knew was part of his baggage, his inheritance, what he would bring forward. When he can come along and just shove it aside, it's an example where I think it's bad-faith bargaining. It's bad-faith presentation to the people of Ontario, and yet the people of Ontario have no recourse in dealing with a government that comes along and changes its mind.

I'm saying, is that not a time to open up referendum politics? Let the public have a say in what's going on here so that when a government does change its mind, and if it has good reasons for presenting it, go back to the public and have a referendum and let the public then take that issue and deal with it, argue it through. So democracy costs money. I hate the fact that it costs so much but at least the public then own the issue and take responsibility for it rather than this government. So that becomes one of my points.

The next point I want to make is, why isn't the government doing something to deal with the issues that are part of the convenience store owners? I have a number of convenience store owners in my riding who are genuinely concerned about what has happened to their business since this bill was brought into law in the province of Ontario.

1810

A Hasty Market store on Apple Creek Boulevard—when you start talking to the proprietor of that store, business has been seriously impacted because of Sunday shopping. As part of a group of proprietors, they've gone on record as the Ontario Convenience Stores Association in trying to get the government to address some of their concerns as to the impact that Sunday shopping has had on their businesses. Unfortunately, the government has not responded to those concerns. In fact, at one point, they hadn't even had answers to their letters. They may have them by now, but a number of the things they've raised in their presentation—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member from Markham is making very good points that should be heard on Sunday shopping. I think we need a quorum.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I won't comment on the quality of the speech, but is there a quorum?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Speaker: We have a quorum and I will recognize the honourable member for Markham.

Mr Cousens: The convenience store owners have put together a paper that outlines a number of the concerns they have with regard to the impact of Sunday shopping on their businesses. From June 7, 1992, when the Ontario government first allowed Sunday shopping, to September 30, 1992, these are some of the data that were accumulated as to the impact it had on their corner stores and the convenience stores association members:

They lost \$59 million in total sales from June 7 to September 30 last year. Convenience stores have lost \$12,000 each in sales for the months of June, July, August and September—\$12,000 each in lost sales during those four months. Close to 2,000 of their convenience store employees lost their jobs during that period of time, because the impact was that as people were going to larger stores and other stores, there was less need for the convenience store to serve that need in the communities. Two hundred convenience stores were closed during that period of time.

You're seeing, on the one hand, a piece of legislation that comes in, and a group of people—entrepreneurs and business people—in our province who are in business to serve the public entrepreneurially are being devastated by the change that took place.

This year, from June 7, 1992, to June 6, 1993, the members of the Ontario Convenience Stores Association will have lost \$179 million in total sales. The convenience stores will have lost \$38,500 each in total sales during that one-year period. An additional 1,000 of their convenience store employees have lost their jobs in that period of time.

On the one hand, the government has made a significant change by introducing the bill that allows for open Sunday shopping, and then on the other hand, you have the convenience stores that are extremely exposed, because their business, which was largely made up by business that would come in on weekends when other stores were closed, has been devastated.

In the meantime, they've written the government. They've asked the government for some consideration. They've brought forward suggestions. The suggestions are legion. One chap I've talked to in my riding is saying, "If only we could have some freedom to sell some extra products, if we were able to have some fast food without necessarily all of the washroom facilities and the other things, at least it would generate some money for us." Their business is in jeopardy.

Eighty-two per cent of the respondents of the convenience store owners and managers association have indicated that they have fewer customers in their stores on Sundays since Sunday shopping came into effect; 83% indicate a drop in revenue. On average, 62.7% of them indicated that their Sunday revenue is down from

10% to 30%; 81.2% of the respondents indicated that their weekly revenue has gone down because of Sunday shopping. Of those, 27.7% say their earnings are down 5% to 10%, and 53% say their earnings are down 10% to 30%.

What we're talking about is a group of people, entrepreneurs within our society, who have been looking for a way to deal with this issue. In going back to the government, the fact that the government has stonewalled them, refused to deal with them on the issue, has just exacerbated their frustration by not being able to find a solution.

All I can say is that it's pretty obvious that the bill is going to be approved. The legislation, Bill 38, would now seem to be almost a fait accompli, although one wonders. The House is divided on the issue, but there are probably going to be enough people that it carries.

The fact of the matter is that the government hasn't looked at all the domino effects that go on when you make one change. That becomes the issue of the convenience store owners and their managers. They are an important segment of our community. They have the entrepreneurial spirit. Yet somehow, when the government fails to listen to them or understand them, then they're left out on a limb and the government just cuts them down.

I don't think there are any of us who along the way haven't had a change of position on this issue. It's gone from Ontario being really shut down and closed on Sunday with no sports and no other activities. In my own riding, back a number of years, I did a poll. I asked the public, back in 1988, what their position was on Sunday shopping and 65% of the people in my riding—and that's the riding of Markham—were opposed to Sunday shopping. If I weren't going to ask them the question, then I wouldn't have accepted their opinion and followed it.

Two years later, when I asked the same questions again on whether my riding was in favour of or opposed to Sunday shopping, it had reversed. Though 65% were opposed to Sunday shopping in 1988, two years later 56% were in favour of Sunday shopping. There had been a significant shift in public opinion.

At that point, when that poll and survey of my own riding came out, I made it very public that my riding had had a change of view and a change of heart and that my position as well had changed. I went public with the results and indicated that as the elected member for that riding, inasmuch as that was then the view of my constituents, my view would reflect their view as well. There was a sense, as things changed, as they can change, that I wanted to have that interplay back with my constituents so that I could be honest with them.

I think that's really the fundamental point which causes irritation to me, that as a government you don't

have the luxury to change positions from before you're elected to after you're elected. What I ask for on the part of Mr Rae and his people who are around him is that he be much more careful on any future legislation that's coming about.

It's too late now to go and seek a referendum or to get public input or to go back and listen to the people, but I ask that you begin to understand that when you are elected on the basis of certain premises or on the Agenda for People, which was laid out by the New Democratic Party, or on other issues which are all part of the platform of that party, you don't come along and change your platform unilaterally, arbitrarily, without listening and understanding what the public has to say. That is the challenge that government has to have.

In rebuilding credibility with the public, the government needs to have some way of dialoguing or talking or sharing with the public so that as things change, you're in a position then to reflect on that and use that information or revise your position. But the public participates in it. The unilateral positions taken by this government without having that consultation are the offence of a majority government, of a majority government that has lost touch with its promises. I know I'm talking about a form of parliamentary renewal where democracy can then go to the grass roots and public and they can say, "We can make a difference. We can be involved and can influence what the government is going to do."

I know the member from Don Mills would know the numbers better than I, but less than 55% of the people in his riding voted in the by-election recently, and that means only about 42% or 44% of the people voted in that election. People aren't voting because they say, "What difference does it make?" It should make, in their own minds, a huge difference to be able to participate in the parliamentary and democratic process.

What government has done, by coming in elected on one set of terms of reference and then changing its

mind, is causing a massive turnoff by the public at large, because the public now feels it has nothing to contribute. Who is going to listen to them anyway?

Bob Rae and his government have already shown that they do not listen; in fact, that their word is not as good now as it was before they were elected. Now when they're in office, they're able to reverse significant positions such as on the casinos or on Sunday shopping or on auto insurance or on strikes or on various other things. This is a government that just lives according to the opportunity of the moment and doesn't really seem to care about the integrity of what it's saying and what it's doing. It has lost touch with what it said before it was elected, and then it does something totally different afterwards. That is what's causing a breakdown in the trust and credibility of politicians.

In fact, I can say that Bob Rae gives all politicians a bad name when he does that kind of thing. What he really has to understand is that the people out there are looking for more from their politicians than broken promises. They want to see a sense where if you're elected, your word is worth something, and that if you say you're opposed to Sunday shopping before you're elected, if you change your mind after you're elected, you go back to the public in some way and give them a chance to react and respond to it. That hasn't happened.

Here we've gone for a year in which this bill has been implemented arbitrarily, unilaterally by Premier Bob Rae. The public are now used to it. The House will now vote on it a year later. Far better to have gone back and dealt with the people that elected him and said, "I am going through a change of heart, and I ask you if you're in favour of it," and find some mechanism where they're able to react to it.

That is what government is all about, I think: to maintain the trust of the people. For this government to have done this is just a breach of trust.

Report continues in volume B.

ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
31	1366	1	18	est responsable de la cause. Mais on se trouve tous
31	1367	1	24	Coop présentement, on avait additionné
31	Contents	1	8	Loi de 1993 sur la négociation

CONTENTS

Tuesday 15 June 1993

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Events in Cornwall	
Mr Cleary	1379
Rabies	
Mr Murdoch	1379
Carousel of the Nations	
Mr Dadamo	1379
Provincial parks	
Mr Brown	1380
Academic streaming	
Mrs Cunningham	1380
Small business	
Mr Perruzza	1380
Ontario student assistance program	
Mr Daigeler	1380
Senior citizens	
Mr Jackson	1381
Environment awards	
Mr Duignan	1381

ORAL QUESTIONS

Social contract	
Mrs McLeod	1383
Mr Laughren	1383, 1385, 1388, 1390
Mr Cousens	1385
Mr Stockwell	1388
Mr David Johnson	1390
Transportation of waste	
Mr Tilson	1386
Mr Wildman	1387
Race relations	
Mr Curling	1387
Mr Laughren	1387
Health professions	
Mr Winninger	1389
Mrs Grier	1389

Ozone-depleting substances

Mr Offer	1389
Mr Wildman	1389

Landfill

Mr O'Connor	1391
Mr Wildman	1391

Political advertising

Mrs Caplan	1391
Mr Charlton	1391

PETITIONS

Special education

Mr O'Neil	1392
-----------	------

Health education

Mr Jim Wilson	1392
---------------	------

Gambling

Ms Haeck	1392
Mr Drainville	1393
Mr Wiseman	1393
Mr Conway	1393
Mr Mahoney	1394
Ms Carter	1394

Automobile insurance

Mr Offer	1392
Ms Harrington	1394
Mr Stockwell	1394
Mr Sola	1395

Public service employees

Mr Runciman	1392
-------------	------

Native hunting and fishing

Mr McLean	1393
-----------	------

Taxicabs

Mr Mammoliti	1393
--------------	------

Closure of agricultural college

Mr Eves	1394
Mrs Fawcett	1394
Mr Ramsay	1395

FIRST READINGS

Rosalind Blauer Centre for Child Care Act, 1993, Bill Pr34

Ms Haeck	1395
----------	------

City of Toronto Act, 1993, Bill Pr80

Mr Marchese	1395
-------------	------

GOVERNMENT NOTICE OF MOTION

Extended hours of meeting, notice of motion number 4

Mr Charlton	1395
Mr Bradley	1397
Mr Eves	1402
Mr Mahoney	1404
Mr Stockwell	1410

SECOND READINGS

Retail Business Holidays Amendment Act (Sunday Shopping), 1993, Bill 38

Mr Murphy	1415, 1420
Mr Cousens	1419, 1420

OTHER BUSINESS

Annual report, Information and Privacy Commissioner, 1992

The Speaker	1381
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Errata

1425

C2201
11
-023



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Tuesday 15 June 1993

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Mardi 15 juin 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

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Tuesday 15 June 1993

Report continued from volume A.

1820

RETAIL BUSINESS HOLIDAYS
AMENDMENT ACT (SUNDAY SHOPPING), 1993
LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES JOURS
FÉRIÉS DANS LE COMMERCE DE DÉTAIL
(OUVERTURE DES COMMERCE LE DIMANCHE)

Continuation of debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail en ce qui concerne l'ouverture des commerces le dimanche.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I thank the honourable member for Markham for his contribution to the debate and welcome any questions and/or comments.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I wasn't going to stand up and make any comments, but after the member for Markham said a couple of things, I felt somewhat compelled to stand up. I have great respect for the member for Markham. I even look to him, in a sense, for some leadership at times. He's very experienced and of course brings some intelligence to the Legislature, and individuals like myself actually look to him for that and for some assistance at times as well. As he knows, I've approached him in hallways and asked for his opinion on certain issues, and there's a reason for that.

That's why it bothers me so much to hear comments like "liar" and comments of that nature in this place. Then the member for Markham does not have even the guts to apologize for comments he made. I sat here and heard those comments, and they were very loud and clear. To me, that's disturbing, because I have great respect for the member for Markham. I really want him to hear this, because it's important to me.

When he talks about the Premier and how he feels that a referendum should have been called on this issue two years ago or a year and a half ago, he neglects to mention that there's a free vote in this place. For the Premier to have called a free vote on this issue showed some guts. I'm wondering why the member did not mention this free vote in his speech. He spoke for a half-hour. He spoke very well at times, and he neglected to mention the free vote.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): When you're new to this assembly, you very quickly learn that there are essentially three roles in this place, and lately we've had a fourth developing.

You have the government, and it has a role, and that role is one of governance. You try to do the best you can for the day and plan for the future and give the province and the government direction.

Then there are two other roles, the role of the official opposition and the role of the third party, and that's essentially to simply undermine everything that is done and to criticize, to criticize quite legitimately. We all recognize that is a function and a role.

The member for Markham did that remarkably well by simply reciting a litany of woes and a litany of changes in direction and that kind of thing and speaking very little about what his own party would do on this particular vote.

We're all going to have to vote and we're all going to have to stand up in our places. I suspect that the Conservative Party will be very divided on this particular issue, but that's something we will see, and that will go down in the record. I suspect that the Liberal caucus to some degree will be very divided as well in terms of its own determination on this particular issue.

But to answer his question very directly, the question was posed to the electorate in the city of North York in the last municipal election, in 1991, and an overwhelming majority of the voters voted yes to Sunday shopping, but as a North Yorker, I'll have you know that I'm going to be voting in favour of no Sunday shopping. I'm going to buck the public trend in North York.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired. I recognize the honourable member for Etobicoke West for up to two minutes.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I guess there was a thread of logic through that statement, and some day someone will explain it to me.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): If there was a thread of logic, you wouldn't understand it.

Mr Stockwell: There's the member for Durham. It's like a bad dream. Every time I get up, he's piping up, the man from Garbagetown.

First let me comment about the statement made by the member for Markham. I thought it was well researched. It was to the point. He had canvassed his constituents and he had come in with a very reasoned, thoughtful argument—I don't think there's any debate about that—and he's clear about where he stands. The interesting thing is that this member has principle enough that he was taking the same direction and the same position when he was campaigning for this job during the election back in 1990. That's something that you, Mr Speaker, would know about: When campaigning for these jobs, you enunciate your policies and positions.

Why you have difficulty understanding that is that we as a party were freed up to say to our constituents what we thought about Sunday shopping. I was in favour. I recall vividly the members for Etobicoke-Rexdale and Etobicoke-Lakeshore talking in very boisterous terms

about how they were opposed, that they were in favour of a common pause day. The principles of the party across the floor were for a common pause day. That's what you campaigned on.

You see, that's the difference, that's the rub: That makes you a four-flusher; that's how we square it with our constituents. We campaigned for the position we are going to take in the not-too-distant future when we vote on this issue.

As far as the "liar" and so on and so forth, and apologies etc, may I suggest to the member for Yorkview that your Premier started this whole campaign about accusing people of being liars, about saying they break their promises, and I've not heard him utter one apology to date to those people he slandered so terribly during that election campaign. That's when that kind of language started, so look unto yourselves before you start casting stones.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Markham has up to two minutes for his response.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): First of all, I want to thank the member for Etobicoke West for his comments and support. I think he touches on one of the very fundamental flaws of this place. The government and the government members do everything they can to disrupt this House and to keep opposition members from making their points. There isn't any doubt that the way they talk and the way they interrupt and the lack of action in the role of the Speaker to cause them to control their tongues—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Cousens: —is in fact a serious, serious problem. So I challenge the Speaker: If you hear the cacophony of sounds there now, it is just typical of the kinds of interruptions they make. I say it is causing problems in this House and it has to—

Interjections.

Mr Wiseman: You started it.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Cousens: You can just hear the background, the member for Durham West and other members. I'm saying is a serious problem and a breakdown in the democratic process, that opposition members are being restricted from saying what they want to say, however they want to say it.

Therefore, I want to make the next point, and that has to do with the integrity of government; that is the point the member for Etobicoke West was really touching upon. There is nothing more important than that: That is the basis for our being elected here, that we will have something to go back to the people. The problem with the New Democrats is that they have lost a lot of points, over the last few years especially, in the way they've dealt with issues like this, when in fact they say one

thing and then say quite another afterwards.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Durham West, please come to order.

Mr Cousens: I also would like to say—

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member for Durham West is asked to come to order.

1830

Mr Cousens: Thank you, Mr Speaker, I appreciate your trying to bring some order.

The fact that the government has a free vote would be a matter of concern.

Interjection.

Mr Cousens: The member for Yorkview says it is a free vote. I wonder if the cabinet has a free vote on it as well. I ask that question. It is not a free vote unless there is a full, free vote in this Legislature, and for him to say that there is a free vote when in fact there isn't causes questions.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr Cousens: In the meantime, I will be supporting this bill.

Mr Mammoliti: I'm glad that the member has given his opinion on the issue, and that's the member for Markham. After some 10 or 15 people on this side asked him how he's going to vote, he finally said he's going to vote in favour of this. That's too bad, because I was hoping that the member for Markham would vote opposed to it, as I am taking the position of No. I'm disappointed that the member for Markham is going to vote in favour of this. As opposed to getting into criticizing the Premier and the government in his debate, perhaps he should have spoken a little more on how and why he's going to vote in favour of this and perhaps the reasons, but instead he chose to criticize and not be constructive in his debate.

I want to go back into the past for a little while, for the first little while anyway, and talk about what got us here. How did we get to this point? As one of the members has mentioned earlier, June 1992, I believe, was the date that this bill first got introduced and it's taken this long to get here. I'm somewhat disappointed in that as well because I was looking forward to debating this a lot sooner.

Nevertheless we're here, and we're here, in my opinion, not because there have been some truths around this issue; I think we're here because of public opinion, and I would agree that the public opinion back then seemed to sway towards opening up on Sundays. I think it's how that public opinion had been reached that we need to debate. I think the messages that were getting out by different people and different organizations and different businesses perhaps were misleading, and for that reason there were individuals who sat at home and

watched TV or perhaps read the newspaper and believed a lot of the rhetoric that was coming out of the debate.

For instance, big businesses had massive lobbying campaigns going on and consistent polls that would give people the wrong impression. They would, for instance, go to the public and ask the question, "Do you want to shop on Sundays?" That might seem to you to be somewhat innocent in terms of a question, but if you ask anybody whether they want to shop on Sunday, the answer from most people is going to be yes, and that's what's been reflected not only in those surveys that big business has done but in the polls as well.

I have been arguing for a few years that the question should not be, "Do you want to shop on Sundays?" but, "Do you want to work on Sundays?" I'm a firm believer that if that question was posed to the public even today, you would find just a complete reversal in terms of people's opinion on this. You know as well as I do that if public opinion is heavy and is going towards a particular issue, governments in a lot of cases have no choice but to change legislation and accommodate public opinion.

I remember, two years ago and a year and a half ago, even in our caucus, my standing up and talking about asking the appropriate questions, putting out the polls in the community that would ask the appropriate questions and not the misleading questions. If those questions were asked, I'm convinced that you'd see a different trend, that even now people would say no to Sunday shopping. They don't want to work on Sunday.

Now, having said that, I think it's also important to talk about after the year. The year's gone by, the stores have been open. How do people feel after a long year's gone by? So I think to a degree, this has actually been good in terms of waiting for this debate and waiting for this year to find out exactly what's happened.

I can almost guarantee you that individuals like myself who are going to vote opposed to this for the right reasons are right in our arguments. If there's anybody in this place who can stand up and show me a report or statistics that would prove that this issue had helped, and helped alone, the cross-border stuff, for instance, I'd be willing to listen to that. But I haven't seen any reports. I haven't seen any positive reports that said that because of Sunday shopping, cross-border shopping has improved in terms of people not going to the United States. Until I see those reports, I'm not going to change my mind.

I'd like to find out—and I know for a fact, because I've spoken to individuals in my riding who have been forced to work on Sundays. This is an argument that is quite repetitive on my part, but I remember talking about this a year ago, and I knew that people would be forced to work on Sundays. The employers may not come out and say, "You have to work on Sunday," or "I'm demanding that you work on Sunday," but what the employers are doing is leaving them with no choice.

They're perhaps sending the message through another employee that if that employee doesn't work on the Sunday, then repercussions are inevitable. I believe that this is happening and happening consistently, and I believe that because I've been talking to individuals in my riding whom it's happened to.

Small businesses in my riding are forced to open to be competitive. They're forced to open because big business has the edge. So on Sundays, places like Galati Bros in my riding, which is a grocery store and which has never really been in favour of Sunday shopping, are forced to open now to be competitive with stores like Miracle Mart or the Price Club or one of the others that might exist around my community. Valencia Foods, for instance, is another one, another small business that was forced to open because of the pressure, because of that competitiveness. Of course, the De Cicco Brothers and a few others didn't want to open, and now I notice the doors open on Sundays, not because they want to but because they've been forced to.

I want to touch a little bit on a referendum that was held, and my colleague from Downsview had mentioned this in a response. In North York a referendum did take place, and it took place in the last municipal election. I've got to tell you that the majority of the people wanted to shop on Sundays, because that was the question. Again, it wasn't, "Do you want to work on Sundays?" It was, "Do you want to shop on Sundays?" The majority of the people in North York clearly said—the people who responded, anyway—that they wanted to shop on Sundays.

1840

But in my community and even in the member for Downsview's community, it was pretty much split right down the middle, and I'm convinced that it was split down the middle not only because of the question but because of the way it was asked.

In my community, a lot of individuals quite frankly can't read for a number of reasons. A lot of them are perhaps from different countries and can't read the English language, so they couldn't read the question in the referendum. For that reason, I believe that the no vote had been hurt because the people who couldn't read it, and the people who seemed to relate to the whole issue of family values and Sunday being a day of family, would have voted no if they'd understood the question.

I'm concerned about that. I don't think that referendum was accurate. I don't think it was conducted fairly as other polls—and this is repetitive as well—in Ontario have clearly shown as well. I disagree with any government which looks at these polls and looks at these referendums and looks at that public opinion that is caused because of these polls, these inaccurate polls and inaccurate referendums and the questions, and I disagree on making the decisions based on that.

This decision I'm convinced was based on those

misconceptions out there, and for that reason I'm voting No. I firmly believe that the average person out there still doesn't want to work on Sundays. Until they actually realize what this means to them and their families, they're probably going to continue shopping on Sundays.

I can tell you that individuals in my riding who have been accustomed to meeting on Sundays for a picnic or for a family lunch or to go to church will end up suffering because those meetings will no longer take place if one or two or three of them are forced to work on Sundays. Eventually, Sundays will be wide open. It will no longer just be convenience stores and the small grocery stores. Eventually you will see Sunday being just another day for individuals to wake up at 7 o'clock, 8 o'clock in the morning, go crazy with their families, get their pyjamas off, get their clothes on and get out there and go to work.

We won't have those picnics any more. We won't have those family reunions any more. Even though I haven't been home that much over the last three years, I know that Sunday is the day I want to spend at home. Even in this position, as a parliamentarian, I'm not home as much as I'd like to be, even on Sundays. I do value Sundays, I want to cherish them and I want to be there. Even after my life in this place, I want to be there.

I don't want to risk meeting up with some employer some day who says, "George Mammoliti, you've got to work on Sundays whether you like it or not." I don't want to do that, and I don't want to do that because of my principles. I believe in Sundays. I believe in Sundays being a family day. I quite frankly am very upset at even some of my colleagues in this place who are voting in favour of this, because I have always thought that principles did mean a lot to a lot of people in this place.

For this reason, I'm somewhat concerned and upset at some individuals in this place, understanding as well—and I do understand when they go to their home ridings perhaps and listen to public opinion, the public opinion being they want Sundays open. But they've got to realize that the questions that were asked a year and a half ago were not the appropriate questions.

Go into your ridings. Do it before we have this vote and ask whether they want to work on Sundays. That's the question that needs to be asked. Then come back here and vote appropriately. I'm convinced that if you do that, you will come back and vote No in this free vote.

Going on to the free vote, I've got to tell you that I'm proud of the Premier in the sense that he has had enough guts to call a free vote on this issue. He knows the importance out there, he knows that a lot of us really feel strongly about the issue and he's wanted to open it up for debate and he's wanted to give people the opportunity in this place to vote with their hearts. I can

tell you for that reason I'm proud of the Premier for doing that, a lot more proud than I would be perhaps for other leaders in this place and other issues that have come up, and the fact that they've neglected them and not called a free vote in this place.

Cross-border shopping: I raised that issue up once already. I dare somebody to bring some sort of report to my office, or mail me—anybody at home that's watching this tonight—fax me a copy of any reports that you might have that clearly indicate that open Sundays have stopped the flow of traffic at the border, have stopped people from actually shopping at the border. I'm willing to argue the fact that it hasn't, and for that reason I'm throwing out this challenge.

A dollar spent over six days will not stretch any further over seven days, and for anybody to think that the dollar they pull out of their pocket they can spend and stretch over a seven-day period is wrong. For anybody to think that the economy is going to benefit over Sunday shopping is wrong, and I'm going to throw this challenge out again to anybody out there who's willing to send me any report or any statistics or any documents that will prove that the economy has gotten better because of Sunday shopping. I'm going to argue that it hasn't, and I'm going to argue that it hasn't based on the economy and the statistics themselves.

For that reason I'm going to say that because of this year that has elapsed since the first introduction of the bill, we have realized that the economy, in my opinion, hasn't gotten any better because of Sunday shopping. Anybody out there, give me the statistics if you've got them, because I want to hear from you. I want to know what proof we have that the economy has gotten better because of Sunday shopping. It hasn't.

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold): None. Absolutely none.

Mr Mammoliti: My colleague Mr Kormos is agreeing with me. It hasn't gotten any better, and I want people when they stand up in favour or opposed to this to remember that. Why are you standing up in favour of it if the economy hasn't gotten any better? Why are you standing up in favour of it if it hasn't helped the situation at the border? Why are you—

Interjection.

Mr Mammoliti: No, it hasn't, and one of my colleagues has said it has. Prove it. If it has, prove it. Show me a report. Show me the statistics.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): The dollar's gone down.

Mr Mammoliti: The member for Durham Centre has said it has, it's gone down. I'd be willing to bet that it's gone down because of the implementation perhaps of the provincial tax, that new thing that we did here that would grab that extra little bit of tax from people.

Mr Kormos: The Canadian dollar is down.

Mr Mammoliti: The Canadian dollar is down as

well. So for that reason, it's gone down, yes, not because of Sunday shopping. Ask Niagara Falls or Cornwall whether or not their businesses—business in terms of their small business—have jumped up over this last year, and the answer is going to be no, they haven't.

Why would people stand up in this place and vote in favour of this? I don't know. I don't know why. I wish that you could answer that question for me, Mr Speaker, because nobody else in this place can. I'm not sure if you're even in the position to be able to do that, Mr Speaker. I would bet that you're not.

1850

The environment: Once this thing gets going, once Sundays are open, once people are going to be coming downtown like crazy with their cars and with their motorcycles and everything else, the smog on Sundays, the pollution on Sundays, the traffic on Sundays, the noise on Sundays will be absolutely—

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): Unbearable.

Mr Mammoliti: Unbearable. And I hope my colleague from Fort York votes opposed to this bill. I'm counting on him and his support after my speech.

I'm going to wind up by saying that even though I have a number of other issues I wish to talk about, I know that the member for Downsview has already raised these, and he and I have been working together on this because this means quite a bit to our community. We don't want to work on Sundays. We don't want to shop on Sundays. We don't want to work on Sundays.

The Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Yorkview for his contribution to the debate and invite questions and/or comments. The member for St Catharines-Brock, up to two minutes.

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): I won't take the full two minutes, but I wanted to thank the member for Yorkview for, in his usual passionate style, making it clear to all of us not only why he objects to it, but I know many other people object to it for similar reasons.

I represent an area which abuts the US, and there was a range of reports that came out at one time, just for the members' information, that did suggest that cross-border shopping could somehow be cured by bringing about some form of Sunday shopping legislation. The reality is that Sunday shopping has been cured by the fall of the Canadian dollar so that people really realize that it is much cheaper to shop at home.

In my trips through the peninsula on the weekend doing my events, I notice that the businesses in many areas are not open. There are some grocery stores that open, but over and above all, people in the Niagara Peninsula prefer to enjoy the family time, to do a bit of gardening, to go to the beach or to basically spend some time with their families. So I, like the member for Yorkview, will be voting against this particular bill.

Mr White: I'd like to commend my friend for his persistence on these issues, for maintaining those kinds of values, those concerns about family life, about family values, about a common pause day where the workers, the families in his riding, can be together.

It has been more than a year since this bill was introduced and a lot of people may say: "Why bother? It's been so long, why bother? It's a fait accompli. A common pause day in this province is gone for ever." But we have members like George Mammoliti who stand up with honour and with dignity, defending the families in his riding and defending the kinds of values that brought us all here. Mr Mammoliti is a good reminder to us all of what it is to be a member in this Legislature, to bring forth those values and to continually represent his constituency, the families in his riding, in the best way possible.

Otherwise, we could all be lost in the market square and forget about the family circle. We could be lost, having given away to commercialism those common family values that our families, generation after generation, have held inviolate, that now have gone by the wayside. I want to commend George again for bringing those things to us and reminding us all that it is not lost, it is not forgotten, and that this battle can still be won for the families of this province.

Mr Perruzza: I know I've responded, so I'm going to be very brief, but I'd like to add my appreciation for the strong stance that's been taken by the member for Yorkview on this particular issue, for essentially standing in his place and defending those working people who live in the riding of Downsview, because like the riding of Downsview, there are many other members, on the government side, may I add, who fully intend to vote in opposition to this bill while many of our public believe that this is no longer an issue.

Many of us in government, for administrative reasons, believe that it is a very important issue and an issue which will be with us for quite some time to come, and I suspect that on this one it will come full circle. So I'd like to commend the member for Yorkview for his opposition to this. I likewise will also be voting against Sunday shopping and in favour of a common pause day for working families in Ontario.

I'd also like to take this very brief moment to expand on a point that was made by the member for Yorkview, the point being that there aren't magically new dollars that are all of a sudden available on Sundays. I note that some of our Conservative colleagues are just walking back into the chamber and I'd like to say to them very clearly that from them we've been getting a very mixed message, a very confused message on this particular issue.

They, quite frankly, don't know how to sit on this. Some of them will be voting in favour and some of them will be voting against. I know that some Liberals will be voting in favour of Sunday shopping, some

Liberals will be voting against Sunday shopping, and the message from them is very confused. I wish they would come clean and clear on what it is that they support and don't support.

The Speaker: The member for Yorkview has up to two minutes for his response.

Mr Mammoliti: I want to thank Drummond White from Durham Centre for the comments—I'm lost for words; thank you very much for the comments, I do appreciate them—and of course, the member from St Catharines and my next-door neighbour, the member for Downsview. I know they're going to do the right thing; I know that they're going to vote opposed to this.

I know that even the Conservatives, for the most part, are going to vote opposed to this. As much as some of those big businesses out there are pushing for Sunday shopping because they want to scrape that last nickel from small business, from that corner store, and make sure that they get rid of another family and get them out of the market, I'm sure they'll vote opposed to this anyway. I'm sure they're going to ignore all the big business that is hitting their offices, perhaps, and asking them to vote in favour of this. I know you're going to do the right thing. I know you're going to vote opposed to this thing. That's the Conservatives.

The Liberals, on the other hand, I don't know what they're going to do either. They've been a bunch of Humpty Dumpty's on this issue: They sit on the fence; they sit on the wall; one day their shell will crack and it'll be over for them as well.

I'd like to know how Mr Cordiano—I notice that my friend from Downsview has got a smile on his face—we know how Mr Cordiano perhaps is going to vote. I'm looking forward to seeing exactly how the member for Lawrence is going to vote on this, because I know what his community is thinking.

Alberta, 1983: Prices rose 15% after pressure from the West Edmonton Mall. Prices rose 15%. We can't ignore those statistics; we've got to learn from them.

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I am very pleased to enter into this debate on Bill 38. I found quite amusing the comments of the member for Yorkview, who just said the Liberals are like Humpty Dumpty. The Liberals have been the only ones in this place who have been consistent over many years as to whether we support Sunday shopping.

Mr White: This way or that way.

Ms Poole: It isn't this way or that way, as the member for Durham, whatever, has just said.

Mr White: Come on, Dianne, which way is it?

Ms Poole: I'm going to tell you, because there were accusations flying on the other side of the House that Liberals won't tell you where they stand, that I support Sunday shopping. I supported it in 1987; I supported it in 1990; I supported it in 1993. I've supported it consistently throughout, and I'm going to tell you why.

Mr Stockwell: You supported local option, Dianne. Don't tell us you supported Sunday shopping. You supported local option. That wasn't Sunday shopping. I was on Metro council. Don't tell people you supported Sunday shopping.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Order. The member for Eglinton has the floor and other members will have the opportunity to participate.

1900

Ms Poole: I have been consistent. If the member for Etobicoke West had read my newsletters throughout the year, it was not only local option; I am a supporter of Sunday shopping.

Mr Stockwell: What year?

Ms Poole: I have been throughout my life, and I will tell you why.

Mr Stockwell: Watch it, Dianne. You voted for local option.

The Acting Speaker: Order. Would the member for Eglinton please address the Chair. I hope members know that interjections are out of order.

Mr Stockwell: Your record speaks volumes.

Ms Poole: Mr Speaker, it's extremely difficult to address the Chair because members such as the one for Etobicoke West keep interrupting.

Mr Stockwell: Just overlook the interruptions.

Ms Poole: Yes, he does tend to overlook the interruptions, Mr Speaker, and I will try to do the same.

To go back to the issue of Sunday shopping, the member for Etobicoke West seems to think that because I voted for local option, that means I voted against Sunday shopping. That is totally erroneous. In fact, the polling in Metro was very clear that the majority of people in Metro felt we should have Sunday shopping. I supported that viewpoint and I have for many years.

But I am going to support this bill. As much as it pains me to support anything the NDP introduces, I will support this legislation. I will not support the position of the NDP, which has waffled, gone back and forth, consistently, but I will support and I will vote for Bill 38.

Some members of this Legislature seem to think that Sunday shopping is a new issue. In fact, regulation of Sunday activity is not a new problem; it's been with us for well over a century. Controlling Sunday activity, telling people what they can do on Sunday, when they can do it and how they can do it, has been the subject of public discussion since the 1800s.

Our attitudes have changed and evolved since then; in fact, when we look at some of the arguments used in the 1800s, we find cause for surprise if not outright amusement. For instance, look at transportation in the late 1800s. Sunday excursions by rail and steamboats were actually banned. Large numbers of working class families had no means of leaving their immediate

neighbourhoods either to pursue leisure time or to go to church. Those are activities—being able to take the transportation routes—that today we take for granted, but in the 1800s those were not a reality and people said no to transportation on Sunday. Incredibly, in 1886, which is just a little over 100 years ago, one man was arrested in Toronto for using his horse and buggy as a taxi to transport people to and from church. It wasn't until after some 20 years of debate that the residents of this city finally had access to streetcar services on Sunday.

I'd like to move a little closer to 1993. Some 20 or 30 years ago, I think some members in this Legislature will remember times when the swings in the playgrounds were locked up and closed on Sundays. Children were not allowed to use them. It used to be illegal to operate wading pools. There are cases of police actually raiding playgrounds to confiscate bats and balls of children because games and amusements were prohibited on Sunday. It wasn't that long ago that if you walked down Queen Street on a Sunday they actually had curtains drawn across so you couldn't even window-shop.

That's only 25 to 30 years ago, but we have changed since then. Even if you look at 1950, the issue of professional sports, the big issue of the day in the early 1950s, when there was a Conservative government under Premier Leslie Frost, was whether municipalities should be given the option—I hope the Conservatives note that particular word—of allowing professional sports to be played between 1:30 and 6 pm. Opponents of the Frost government's bill predicted dire consequences if the bill were passed: The fabric of our society would be ripped asunder, our children would be corrupted and there would be more people in mental hospitals. This is 1950, sports fans. Today, Sunday sports are an integral part of our lives. I will ask the honourable members of this House, does anybody here think I'm corrupting my son or my daughter by taking them to a Blue Jays game on Sunday? Surely not. I think that shows how much we have evolved.

If you move forward to 1961, Ontario municipalities were given the option of allowing Sunday movies and concerts. One prominent opponent at the time, if you can believe it, said that this would "hasten the spread of communism." Was he right in his claim when he said that if Sunday movies were allowed, "You soon wouldn't be able to tell the difference between Toronto and Moscow"?

Changes continued to come. In 1967, alcohol was allowed with meals, heaven forbid. In 1968, there came Sunday afternoon horse racing, Sunday trade shows, Sunday exhibitions, Sunday fairs. Again, each of these changes brought controversy, but at the same time each reflected the growing diversity of our province, and today there are few who would argue with being able to be involved in these activities.

While controversy about Sunday shopping isn't new, our province has evolved significantly from those days. I don't think the arguments of the opponents of Sunday shopping are particularly original. They want to return to an Ontario which I believe simply does not exist any more: We're no longer a predominantly Anglo-Saxon society; most of us live in urban areas; most women work outside the home. Society has changed enormously.

One reason I have always been a strong supporter of Sunday shopping, notwithstanding the erroneous information given by the member for Etobicoke West, is that I believe that Sunday shopping is a feminist issue. I know some members may find that somewhat surprising, but in February this year I found an article in the newspaper which espoused the same view. It was by Eve Drobot, an article in the *Globe and Mail* in February. I'll just take some excerpts from it.

"Let's face it: 30 years of the feminist movement and women still do most of the shopping." I don't know if that's true for all the members of this House, but I'm sure it would be true of a substantial number. "The politicians babble about closing stores on Sundays to preserve the family, but they don't seem to realize that for most women having only one sanctioned full day to run errands puts more pressure on the family. Trying to work, spend time with kids and not run out of toilet paper has most women constantly frazzled."

Believe me, in our family I constantly face that particular dilemma. I buy toilet paper in vast quantities. I have it stacked along the stairs to my basement, because it is so frazzling when you're trying to not miss a vote, speak in the House, run to a community meeting and then get home and your kids tell you, "Mom, there's no toilet paper."

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): There's a use for all those Liberal policy papers.

Ms Poole: I'll ignore that unkind intervention and continue with a quote from this article called Sunday Shopping: A Feminist Issue. "Sure, many stores are open on Thursday evenings, but anybody with a job and a family will tell you that after working all day, dashing to pick the kids up from day care and throwing something edible on the dinner table, you're less than inclined to saunter over to the local mall, even if you're clean out of underwear. 'The ability to shop on a Sunday would add some choice to my week,' said one woman. 'It would give me a degree of control in my life, which is always on the edge of being out of control.'"

Yes, I believe Sunday shopping is a feminist issue. If you look at the number of women in the workforce, the statistics very clearly show that there are far more women in the workforce than ever before. In 1991, 60.5% of all women over 15 were in the labour force. If you look at the statistics of women with children, 63% of mothers with children less than age 16 were

employed in 1991 versus 50% in 1981.

The family has changed. Many more women are now working outside the home and find it terribly difficult and inconvenient to try to cram all our errands into that one day of the week. Because we as women quite often are the ones who end up with juggling work and family responsibilities, it is sometimes a godsend to have that extra day when we can do some of the errands we have to do.

One of the arguments against Sunday shopping has been the harm to family life. I was really quite fascinated to hear Mr Cousens, the member for Markham, talk about how he was supporting this bill, because I happen to have saved some of my old clippings from June 1988, the last time we debated Sunday shopping, and I was quite surprised to see that Mr Cousens had a completely different viewpoint at that time.

1910

I'll quote. On June 14, 1988, Mr Cousens said:

"I am as convinced now as I ever was that this government"—a Liberal government, of course—"is absolutely wrong to be bringing in these changes which will affect the future of Ontario by opening up Sundays wide open for shopping and work and will change the fabric and the family life of this province in a way I strongly oppose. It is undermining the family; it is undermining the home; it is undermining the values that make this province strong."

Then he went on to say:

"I want to keep a pause day. I want to bring my family around me on those days and so do many other people. I don't want to be forced into not being together with my family and my loved ones because some of them are out working and some of them are now distracted with other things. I think it is good if you can shut the door to some of those opportunities."

Later in his speech, which was a very long speech, Mr Cousens made the comment:

"We are talking about a piece of legislation"—that was the local option brought forward by the Liberals—"that touches upon the very dynamics of what our communities are all about. It touches upon what we really want for our province and for our people—a chance to get together with their families in their homes and with their people; a chance to take time off, a chance to rest, a time to grow, a time to read, a time to swim, a time to recreate themselves. By just keeping the old clock moving as far as work is concerned, many people aren't going to have that opportunity."

Mr Cousens's view in the Conservative caucus was shared by many others. I don't know where they stand now, but I can tell you where Mrs Marland, the member for Mississauga South, stood at that time. She said:

"The quality of life for families will be impaired. People are more than simply economic entities and their needs are complex. Increased economic activity will

wreak more havoc and do more harm than good in this sense."

Then Mr Runciman went on to say:

"Comment is appropriate in respect to the legislation on Sunday shopping, and that is that supporters, when we take a look at the bigger social picture, have as their goal to reshape what we in this province are into something we are not. They repudiate virtually all of the values out of which this country has emerged. They debunk our religion and undermine our families. I am proud to be part of a party that is opposing that legislation."

Then Mrs Cunningham went on to say:

"I'm certainly pleased on behalf of the opposition parties in the House to debate a bill that will go down in history in this province as a bill that we think will change the way of life and the quality of life for families in Ontario in a way that has never happened before. It is one that will impact on families and on the way we live in this province in a way that we will not be proud of. Considering that for hundreds of years Sunday has been a family day or a day of rest and relaxation, the Progressive Conservative Party supports this committee against open Sunday shopping and the principle of a continued pause day for the good of families and maintenance of the quality of life in Ontario."

I'm sorry, but I think that's all a bunch of nonsense. We have now had open Sunday shopping in this province for a year. Families have not been destroyed. Families have not disintegrated. People have not stopped going to church. People have not stopped spending time together. In fact, I submit to you that it's precisely the opposite.

I really enjoy having an opportunity to go out shopping for clothes with my daughter on a Sunday afternoon. Quite frankly, it's the only time I usually get, because I'm busy with community activities on Saturday. I think Sunday shopping can be a family activity as much as anything else one does on Sunday, whether it be going to the Blue Jays, whether it be going to church, whatever Sunday activity you wish to engage in.

I'd like to turn your attention back to almost five years ago to the day, June 8, 1988, when I spoke in this Legislature on Sunday shopping. I was particularly concerned with a number of the comments made by members of the Conservative Party and the NDP about what the impact was going to be on family life. This is what I had to say at that time, and I'll repeat just a very small portion of it. It was referring to comments at this stage by the member for Welland-Thorold, who I think was in the House a bit earlier:

"As he raises the spectre of family life disappearing in this province because of this legislation, I just say to him it is nonsense. Families who wish to worship on Sunday will continue to do so. Families who wish to

spend time together will continue to do so. I just say the family is a very resilient institution. Its fate will never hinge on a single act of this Parliament. I think it is presumptuous for us as legislators to think that we have the power to make or break the family. The family has existed through the centuries. It has weathered war and famine, dramatic changes in values and traditions, upheavals and criticism. It has survived intact. It will not suddenly vanish because a store is open on Sunday. I firmly believe that, and that is why I am supporting this legislation. It does not impugn the integrity of the family. As the Premier said in this House not too long ago, family life simply cannot be legislated."

So, contrary to what the member for Etobicoke West has said, the record very clearly shows that I have been a supporter of Sunday shopping in this province. I have been a supporter of the local option, because I think the local option gave municipalities an opportunity to decide for themselves what was best for their community. And why does that mean I was opposed to Sunday shopping? It's nonsense, utter nonsense.

I'd like to share a few quotes on local option. If you'd entered into the debate in this Legislature back in 1988, you would have thought that all the Conservatives and all the NDP were totally opposed to Sunday shopping. You would also have thought they were totally opposed to local option because the local option was going to end up with a domino effect and municipalities would fall like dominoes. They would all have Sunday shopping once one did.

Yet there was major support for the local option. The Toronto Sunday Sun, which isn't always known for its support of the Liberals, whether in government or opposition, said: "The local-option approach recognizes that the same lifestyle does not apply uniformly across this province."

The Kingston Whig—Standard in December 1986 said:

"As a society, we want retail shops to be open at more convenient times, and the Sunday closing law interferes with that impulse. Many people enjoy the chance to be with their family on Sunday, but they also enjoy shopping with their family on Sunday, shopping in today's society having become a popular form of family recreation.

"They might also enjoy the variety that Sunday shopping would offer, changing the common pattern for so many families, in which Saturday is a rush day from store to store and Sunday a pause day. It would give us more control over our lives."

Actually, I have a quote here from the Ottawa Citizen which you, Mr Speaker, might be very interested in.

"Current store hours regulation should be loosened to meet local wishes," says Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry MPP Noble Villeneuve. "We should have the choice to shop if we desire, and designated stores

should have no privilege over another."

Mr Speaker, I agreed with you then, even though at that time you weren't Mr Speaker, and I agree with you now, and I'm really happy to see that there is at least one Conservative who at the time was consistent, stood up and said he supported the option of shopping on Sunday.

There are more issues from the London Free Press, the Oshawa Times, the Toronto Star, the Grimsby Independent. They go on and on. There were many, many papers and individuals and groups that supported Sunday shopping.

But it all got overridden by a very, very—I'm trying to think of a polite word for it, other than "obstreperous," but it was an obstreperous opposition who said the Liberals' local option wouldn't work. I think it was very clear it would have worked, and I find it kind of ironic that the Conservatives were so opposed to local option, because in 1950, when they were opening up the rules for sports, as I previously referred to, this is the comment of Premier Leslie Frost which he made in the Legislature:

"The matter is placed in the hands of the people themselves and under absolute control of their elected municipal councils. There is nothing wide open about this act. It does nothing to induce a community to change its pattern of life."

I think that's true. I think when we look at what Sunday shopping has done one year later, we find that indeed it hasn't dramatically changed people's patterns.

It has made life more convenient. It has helped out a bit with youth unemployment, which is certainly fortunate, given the terrible state of our youth unemployment these days. It has provided a partial answer to cross-border shopping. The irony is, when I look around my community of Eglinton, half the stores are open and half are not. Store owners have exercised their local option, their choice to be open, and their choice to be open was dictated by the demands of the marketplace, by the owners' personal beliefs, by other factors, but that choice was there and still a substantial number of stores in my area are open on Sunday.

1920

There's no doubt that there are impacts and that some of those impacts are negative. I am particularly sympathetic to the plight of the corner store owners. I think they have been harmed by Sunday shopping in that now, with the big grocery stores open, people are less likely to whip up to the corner store to serve their needs. But I think there's an answer for that. I believe this government should open up the whole issue of beer and wine in corner stores. I think that's an issue that I supported at the time it was introduced by the Liberal government and was voted down by the Conservatives and NDP. I supported it then; I support it now.

There has been no information to show that jurisdic-

tions which have it have had widespread abuse. Enforcement can be taken care of through rules and regulations. As my friend from Prescott and Russell said to me one day, "When talking about beer and wine in corner stores, people constantly confuse the issues of consumption, availability and abuse—three very different issues," and he's absolutely right. That would be something this government could do as initiative to help those small corner stores and help them survive these very perilous times.

I would like to point out that in my riding of Eglinton Sunday shopping, after it has been put into effect, is widely supported. I did a survey a year ago and I asked my constituents two questions relating to Sunday shopping. I asked them others, but I'll refer specifically to the Sunday shopping ones.

My summer student, Bart Nickerson, did some really neat little graphs for my householder on it, and we asked the question, "Do you feel stores should be able to open every Sunday if they want to?" and 72 % of the Eglinton residents who responded said yes in response to this question: 1,220 respondents said yes; 429 said no; and 52 said they were undecided. That is a significant majority in my riding that wanted Sunday shopping, and I feel that I have reflected their views both when I was in government and now that I am in opposition.

But one thing that really concerns me about where we are today is the waffling of the NDP and the process it has gone through. When they were in opposition they were totally opposed to Sunday shopping; common pause day was the theme. "Family life would disintegrate with Sunday shopping," they said. "We have to protect the rights of the workers. We have to strengthen the family and community life. We have to protect the rights of business and the workers." That was their theme.

In fact, in November 1990 in the speech from the throne they reiterated that theme. Then in June 1991 the NDP government introduced Bill 115, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act. What this did was amend the Liberal legislation to prohibit Sunday shopping for most retail businesses. It seems that every June the NDP gets a bug about Sunday shopping. In June 1991 they introduced Bill 115 which said we don't want Sunday shopping. Then in June 1992 they introduced Bill 38 which permitted retail stores to open for business on Sunday. But in the meantime there was mass chaos. In fact, what they've done is put this province on hold for a full year. That is unconscionable.

People don't know if what this government has mandated for the last year, which is that you can shop on Sunday—it's wide-open shopping on Sunday, even though there's no law in place to enforce it—people don't know whether this legislation is actually going to pass now, and here we are a year later, another June, three Junes in a row—like I say, June seems to bring

out the Sunday shopping bug in the NDP—and we don't know whether the legislation is going to pass. They have badly mismanaged this issue.

The legislation they introduced in June 1991 was complex, it was bureaucratic and it discriminated by being based on a set of tourism criteria which discriminated against retailers on the basis of size, geographic location and type of clientele. Not only that; in their legislation in June 1991 they established a very unwieldy application process which would result in the establishment of a costly local bureaucracy and endless appeals to the OMB at a time when the OMB was badly backlogged and we could least afford it.

I can understand why the NDP backed down, but surely it's time that the people of this province had a right to expect some consistency from their government. This government, this NDP government has time and time again reneged on its promises, changed its mind, backed down, gone to retroactive legislation. Again that's the case with the new legislation they introduced in June 1992, a full year ago. It's retroactive, so they said people can go out and shop. Because it's retroactive, therefore it doesn't matter whether the members of this Legislature have passed it. It doesn't matter if it's the law of the land. Welcome to chaos management, and this is something the NDP excels in.

This is a government in chaos, and this is illustrated by how it has handled Sunday shopping. First, they say they're opposed to it in opposition, then they say they're opposed to it in government, then they bring in a bureaucratic, complex piece of legislation that everybody objected to. Then, in the middle of dealing with this legislation, in the middle of public hearings, they cancel the public hearings without saying why. Then, many months later, again they reverse their decision and say, "Well, we're going to have it wide open."

But they didn't have the guts to bring that legislation forward so we could debate it in this House. In fact they still don't have the guts to follow through, and we don't know as of this moment in time whether this legislation is going to pass. They have perpetrated a giant hoax, and if this legislation fails, I put it back on the heads of the NDP that has badly bungled this issue as it has every other one that it has faced.

I am going to support this legislation even though the government that introduced it is irresponsible, even though I believe that the process which it has used is totally indefensible and even though this is a government in chaos, because I believe that Sunday shopping opens up options and choices for people.

We have put in place measures to ensure that workers are protected, which was an important consideration. We have seen in the last year that there has been no dramatic impact. If they would help out the corner stores, then that would be the one step they could take to make sure that the impact of Sunday shopping was all positive across the way.

I will support this legislation and urge other members of this Legislature to do so.

1930

Mr Stockwell: It's not often you get a chance to reminisce about the days of the Liberal administration in this province, but it gives me an opportunity to reminisce from the member for Eglinton.

They wrote a very interesting piece of legislation when they dealt with Sunday shopping. That piece of legislation allowed two things to happen: It allowed those who are in favour of Sunday shopping, such as the member for Eglinton, to stand before her constituents and say categorically without debate, "I am in favour of Sunday shopping and I support it in the Legislature." But the member who was opposed to Sunday shopping took that same piece of legislation, went back to his constituents or her constituents and stood before them and said, "I'm opposed to Sunday shopping and I supported this piece of legislation because I'm opposed to Sunday shopping."

In true Liberal form, they were both right. Why were they both right? Because in true Liberal form—I've grown accustomed to it over the years—"Which way is the wind blowing? We just lick the finger and test." Which way is the wind blowing? Well, they measured it this way. They said, "We're so in favour, we're so committed, we're so behind Sunday shopping," and allowed Dianne Poole from Eglinton to stand up and defend it, "that we will say this without debate: Someone else should decide."

That's what the Liberals did. They said, "Let the municipalities decide. We'll let Peel decide and Durham decide and Metro decide." Their decision would be whether or not to allow their stores to open on Sunday. We called that the domino legislation, because if Peel opened, Metro opened, Durham opened, York opened, and these poor souls sitting in opposition today never had to accept responsibility for anything, in true unbiased Liberal fashion.

So I'm sick and tired of hearing members opposite me on this side of the House tell me how informed, how fairminded and how solid they were behind Sunday shopping. You were behind nothing. You were only behind letting someone else do the dirty work, make your decisions, and you sold out, mucked out and gave up.

Mr Perruzza: I'd be remiss to let this opportunity go by as well because, I have to tell you that I was on municipal council when the Liberals decided, not to decide whether they were going to open or close stores on Sundays, but rather that somebody else, somewhere else, should make the decision. I can't help but, I guess, reiterate a lot of the things that my good friend from Etobicoke West said with respect to the support for the local option, as many Liberals will call it.

I guess it will be really interesting to see, when we

come down to a vote, how Liberals will actually vote on the legislation that's before us. I suspect that at some point, some of them will have to walk into this chamber and vote. I don't expect all of them to be here, because some of them will still want to duck the issue in the same way they essentially ducked it the first time they had a go-around on this, but some of them will walk into this place, and some of them will support the bill and some of them will vote against the bill. For the first time, we will know, their parishes will know, their shoppers will know, their small convenience stores will know, their big malls will know in their ridings how they actually sit with this legislation, with Sunday shopping, and the member for Eglinton will get to vote.

But the decision they took in their mandate, the Peterson government, the local option in saying, "Well, Metro's going to have a rule, but Vaughan is going to have another rule"—so the little mom-and-pop shop south of Steeles had one advantage, the little mom-and-pop shop across the street, but 15 or 20 yards away they were operating under different rules. If that's the Liberal answer and if that was the Liberal solution, I can understand why they're in opposition today.

M. Jean Poirier (Prescott et Russell) : Premièrement, je me lève pour féliciter ma collègue d'Eglinton pour sa présentation. Mais je voulais dire aussi à mon collègue d'Etobicoke-Ouest et à mon collègue de Downsview que c'était quand même assez intéressant de voir ou d'essayer de comprendre leur position. Ni l'un ni l'autre était là présentement, mais pour mon collègue de Downsview, je voulais lui rappeler, quoiqu'il soit bien certain, que je serai ici pour voter et que je vais voter en faveur du projet de loi 38. Donc, il y en a un au moins qui ne se cachera pas pour aller voter pour cette loi-là. En ce qui a trait aux autres, ils prendront bien leur responsabilité.

Mais ma collègue d'Eglinton a très bien présenté la chose, et au moment où les Libéraux avaient présenté leur loi, je crois que ça représentait fidèlement l'opinion que l'on pouvait trouver à l'échelle de la province, c'est-à-dire la grande variété d'opinions, soit des régions rurales, qui étaient fortement contre le magasinage le dimanche, soit des régions très urbaines comme celle représentée par la circonscription d'Eglinton, où les gens étaient très fortement en faveur du magasinage le dimanche.

Donc, à ce moment-là, la loi libérale représentait fidèlement le point de vue de l'Ontario qui, comme vous le savez très bien, peut être très varié d'un coin à l'autre de la province. Trouver une loi consistante pour dire que tous les Ontariens et les Ontariennes vont embarquer à 100 % derrière telle ou telle loi, j'attends toujours la journée où nous pourrons voir ça en Ontario. Que l'on parle du magasinage le dimanche, de l'agriculture, de l'environnement ou de l'éducation, peu importe.

Tout ça pour dire que j'ai trouvé la présentation de ma collègue d'Eglinton très intéressante ; je la félicite.

Ses notes historiques ont été très fidèles à ce qui s'est passé dans le temps. Je me rappelle les Conservateurs qui avaient un projet de loi qui avait autant de trous dedans qu'un fromage suisse, un fromage emmenthal. On l'a corrigé. Et maintenant, justement, les NPD, qui changent d'opinion comme ils changent de sous-vêtements, finalement on a une position du NPD.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I'm pleased to make a few comments with regard to the presentation made by the member for Eglinton. I've been following Sunday shopping for some 20 years or better. There has been a lot of discussion. There are really a lot of people who are opposed to Sunday shopping. There are a lot of people in favour of it.

But I wanted to expand a little on the remarks made by the member with regard to beer and wine in the corner stores, because I remember an election in about 1985 where the Premier at that time had indicated that this is what we should have, beer and wine in the corner stores. It certainly raised the issue. There were a lot of people who supported the government at that time with regard to that very issue. It comes along after that issue is over and they bring in the local option, which really no municipality wanted. Nor did the municipalities support it.

I spoke in this Legislature back on June 3 with regard to Sunday shopping. I raised the issues that pertain to my riding with the people and what they were expressing to me. I read letters with regard to people who were in favour and I read letters with regard to the people who were opposed to it.

It was interesting. I talked about the people from Gingersnap Junction, who had talked to me with regard to Sunday shopping. Some people don't know where Gingersnap Junction is, but I'm going to tell you. It's in the riding of Simcoe East. There's a little village called Elmvalle and it is about eight kilometres west of Elmvalle on Highway 92, just before you get to Wasaga Beach. It is now known as Langman Corners. Those people have raised the issue. There are a lot of people opposed to Sunday shopping in rural Ontario.

I enjoyed the remarks by the member for Eglinton, although really I'm not too sure what she said.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Eglinton has two minutes in response.

Ms Poole: I certainly enjoyed the comments of the member for Simcoe East. Although I too wasn't sure in the final analysis what he had said, I did enjoy hearing about Gingersnap Junction.

I found it equally entertaining to listen to the histronics of the member for Etobicoke West. In fact, I always find him quite entertaining, and quite comical at times. But I found it actually quite humorous that he, who was a municipal councillor who was constantly saying to the province, "Let us decide things locally," wanted to toss this hot potato back. He was saying that

in true Liberal form we said, "Let somebody else decide."

Who we said should decide are the communities themselves, so if the people from Gingersnap Junction chose not to have Sunday shopping, that was their right. But if the people of north Toronto and the people of Toronto want Sunday shopping, surely that should be our right as well. The member for Etobicoke West talked about the rolling domino theory. That's been proven to be nonsense. It really is quite amusing when you hear some of the Conservatives, with due respect and excepting you of course, Mr Speaker, try to switch sides or adjust their thinking and blame it all on the Liberals.

The member for Downsview—I'm sorry he has left; he was here until just a moment ago—said the Liberals are trying to duck the issue. Look at our speaking list on Sunday shopping. You will find that the Liberals are certainly the last ones to want to duck this issue. We want to talk about it. We want to vote on it. Our leader has said we will have a free vote and every member of this caucus will have an opportunity to stand up and be counted. I would be proud to support this legislation.

1940

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I am very pleased tonight to rise and speak with respect to Bill 38, an Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping, which received first reading in this House about a year ago.

As we know, this bill will enable retail business establishments to open on Sundays. Easter Sunday and other holidays which fall on a Sunday will remain as retail business holidays.

Because of the amendments set out in section 1 of the bill, section 4.4 of the act which relates to Sunday openings in December is unnecessary. Accordingly, it is repealed. It's a very simple bill, just literally one page, and it's very clear what this bill does: It allows wide-open Sunday shopping in Ontario.

Our leader, Mike Harris, has consistently taken the position that wide-open Sunday shopping should be allowed. I've had a different position, and I respect the fact that our leader has consistently said to us in this Progressive Conservative caucus that we are free to represent the views of the people who sent us here. I respect that very, very much from our leader.

During the election campaign, I took a very strong position opposed to wide-open Sunday shopping. I'd like to read a news release that I sent out August 20, 1990.

Headline: "Arnott Opposed to Sunday Shopping"

"Wellington PC candidate Ted Arnott is dismayed by the Liberal government's handling of the Sunday shopping issue.

"I strongly believe in keeping Sunday a common pause day. Wide-open Sunday shopping will have a

harmful effect on the family lives of many people in Wellington, and I oppose it.'

"During the 1987 election campaign, David Peterson denied that he intended to change the provincial Sunday closing law. Soon after his landslide victory, however, his government introduced legislation to give municipalities the responsibility for regulating Sunday shopping." In other words, the local option.

"Many groups opposed this change, including municipal, church, labour and small business organizations. The Ontario PC caucus at the time predicted that the new law would eventually lead to wide-open Sunday shopping.

"The Liberals, characteristically as it turned out, refused to listen. The Liberal members unanimously supported the extension of Sunday shopping.'

"Two months ago"—which would have been in June 1990—"the Ontario Supreme Court ruled the new law"—the local option law—"unconstitutional, and it was struck down."

At that time, in August 1990 in Ontario, there was no law prohibiting stores from opening Sundays, so as the Conservative caucus of the time stated, the local option law eventually led to wide-open Sunday shopping.

"I deeply sympathize with the merchants and store clerks who may be forced to work on Sunday. They should be free to spend Sundays with their families.

"Designated tourist areas like the Fergus market and the village of Elora have been open on Sunday for many years. These are exceptional cases because they sell primarily to tourists on weekends.

"I think that certain tourist area exemptions such as these should be allowed. We should ensure, however, that the concept of Sunday as a common pause day is respected wherever possible."

Three years later, I continue to support everything that was in that press release that I sent out three years ago.

There has been a lot of confusion with respect to this issue. There's been a lot of flip-flopping among various parties, and the government has had a difficult time with it. The Liberal government between 1987 and 1990 had a very difficult time with this issue.

This issue is filled with emotion with many people because it's relating to values. People feel very strongly one way or the other whether or not stores should be allowed to be open on Sunday and whether or not stores need to be open on Sunday.

One of the things that concerns me most about this particular bill is its retroactivity. It was designated to come into effect the date of first reading. In other words, the government ceased and stopped issuing any citations against stores that opened Sundays; it stopped enforcing the law. This bill has not passed into law, yet for the past year, stores have been open. It indicates, I

believe, the government's contempt for the Legislature when it continues to bring in these retroactive bills. They're saying that they don't care about the debate in this House; they don't care about the views of the members. In other words, they have contempt for the people who sent us here. This has happened repeatedly over the past three years and it concerns me greatly. It distresses me greatly.

I'd like to read another editorial that appeared in The Interim magazine in June 1992, last year, at the same time that this bill was brought forward and took effect.

The title is "Sunday Shopping and Consumerism."

"Canadians should stop paying attention to self-serving newspaper polls on Sunday shopping. Ask questions, such as, 'Would you like to work on Sundays while others go to the beach or the cottage?' and the results would be spectacularly against open Sundays.

"The polls, and those who support them, are appealing to the worst aspects of consumerism. Instead of being guided by a comprehensive view of the needs of the worker as a human being, including his spiritual and mental needs, consumerism appeals to the baser instincts and self-interests of the general consumer to help override permanently his rights and needs in order to satisfy a few short-term benefits.

"Sunday shopping will destroy much and accomplish little. It will not halt cross-border shopping, which has to be settled, if it is to be settled at all, by other means, such as a lower Canadian dollar, border taxes and fees for shopping via the mail. It will not put the balance sheets of Sears Canada and the Bay in the black despite their outrageous claims that it will. Their own financial statements show 40 years of annual profits without Sunday trade. Finally, it will not bring greater prosperity. A dollar spent over seven days won't stretch any further than one spent over six.

"What Sunday shopping will do, however, is bring higher prices. Salaries, heat, electricity and insurance will have to be covered. When Alberta adopted it, under pressure from the Ghermezian brothers of the West Edmonton Mall in 1983, prices rose by 15%. Today, the world's biggest mall is one-fifth empty and the Ghermezians are busy elsewhere.

"It will also mean clogged roads seven days a week instead of six. Delivery trucks, moving vans, milk and gasoline tankers and service vehicles of all types will be on the road, as on any other day, together with the workers. Its environmental effect on large cities will be more smog and more pollution, this time without a break of even one day a week.

"Instead of bringing prosperity, the effect of Sunday shopping will be increased misery, especially for families. Small businessmen without replacement staff will be forced to remain open seven days a week. Employees of the large chains will be compelled to work on penalty of being fired. Legislation cannot

protect them because an employer or supervisor has many ways of making life miserable for an unwilling employee.

"Children will need more day care; many families will not have sufficient time together; single parents will be under even greater stress than before. And many full-time employees will be replaced by part-time workers for whom the employer will not have to pay social benefits and who can be fired or hired at will.

"The dignity of workers requires the Sunday break. Canadians have both the right and the need to worship God and they need a free Sunday for their spiritual as well as their mental health.

"It took 120 years, from the 1830s till the 1950s, before the western world as a whole allowed fair wages, Sundays off and a shorter work week. Often the battle took place against bitter opposition. We must not now allow greed to triumph again and take away those hard-gained freedoms, alienating people from society and one another through false and superficial gratifications."

I've read that entire editorial because I think it's a very, very important part of this debate. I know it was sent to all members of this House in June 1992. All of the predictions in this editorial have not come true, I will grant. However, some of them have and, without question, there are many families right now who, because of wide-open Sunday shopping, do not have a common pause day, and I think that families across this province have lost as a whole because of that change.

I've consulted widely with my constituents on this issue. I continue to hear from them on this issue, although it's not quite as topical an issue right now as it was in 1990. I've taken the opportunity to send out a questionnaire to my constituents. It's a fairly extensive, eight-page questionnaire and one of the questions is on Sunday shopping. I'm starting to get the responses back in, but I've unfortunately not had time to tabulate them all and they're still coming in, but I hope that that will give me an up-to-date impression of what the opinion is of people of my riding, or the majority who filled that out, on Sunday shopping.

But I spoke to Mayor Jim Gibbons of the town of Fergus, and Jim is also remarkable in that he owns the Canadian Tire store in Fergus. I asked his advice on this bill and he said to me: "If I'm open on Sundays, I need staff. I need staff." It's a very, very simple statement, but of course he needs staff. He needs staff to service his customers, and for the government to indicate, 'Oh, no, don't worry. People won't have to work. We'll give them protection and they won't have to work,' frankly, there's no protection that is going to be adequate to ensure that people do not have to work on Sundays.

1950

I've said enough on this bill. I don't want to take the full half-hour, but as I say, I still feel that families in this province have lost something because of wide-open

Sunday shopping and I continue to believe that. The world has not come to an end; the sun still comes up in the morning, but nevertheless families have lost something because of wide-open Sunday shopping.

Mr Kormos: Very briefly, because that's the short period of time allowed, I want to thank the most recent speaker for his comments. I think what's interesting is that we see what people from the real Ontario have to say about these sorts of issues as compared to—no, I understand that Yonge and Bloor is part of Ontario, but too often what happens here at this Legislature is that Yonge and Bloor, in the minds of so many members of this assembly, becomes all of Ontario.

We've just listened to a representative from a part of Ontario which represents the hardworking people in small communities. He speaks about family values, and I say to you why I am confident that he is far more representative of most Ontarians than those who would want to secularize Sundays, those who would want to turn it into yet another day of the week, those who would want to attack Sunday as a special day for church and family and community and yes, for workers.

I will be pleased, later this evening, to join in this debate and in fact speak as best I can, in the short period that's allowed, on behalf of the folks in Welland and Thorold about the sorts of things that are important to them, because they too, unlike the folks and the good people who live at Yonge and Bloor, they are far, I tell you, far more representative of the real Ontario than what we see when we look out the windows of this Legislative Assembly.

You know, one of the problems of working here is that when you look out the windows, I don't care whether you're looking east, west, north or south; you don't see any farmers' fields, you don't see any small communities, you don't see any working people at their tasks. Why, you don't even see the unemployed, because it's somehow unseemly for them to be permitted to gather around Queen's Park.

I congratulate the member and I look forward to joining this debate later this evening, perhaps in around an hour, and hour and 15 minutes if people are at all interested.

Mr McLean: I want to compliment the member for Wellington on his remarks tonight with regard to Bill 38. This member for Wellington is following in the footsteps of his predecessor, as a gentleman and a man who always gives. His remarks are positive.

I know the problem that he's having with regard to Sunday shopping, because I am from rural Ontario too. I have small-town Ontario and the city, and there is a division of thought within that community. I've had letters from people who are 85 years old who believe that Sunday shopping is the right thing. They want to have open Sunday shopping. I've had letters from young people who want Sunday shopping not to happen.

There is a great concern across this province with regard to this very issue and it's not an easy issue to deal with, as we have heard from the member for Wellington. I think he said it very clearly and very plainly with regard to the concerns that are in his constituency.

I had the opportunity to travel part of the province when we were dealing with this in committee. I remember being in Windsor, and we had mostly trade unions that came before the committee. Most of those people were definitely opposed to Sunday shopping. They wanted a common pause day and they did not want the legislation to be effected.

I was there and I heard the remarks that were brought forward. I remember the Premier of this province saying that Sunday shopping was not an issue in this election; he wanted stores closed. Since he's been Premier, he has totally changed his tune.

I thank the member for Wellington for his remarks here this evening.

Mr Mammoliti: Being very specific to one point that the member for Wellington brought up, which was of course the protection of workers, I agree with him wholeheartedly. I don't believe that the mechanism is in the piece of legislation that we're all looking forward to seeing, even though some of us didn't want to see a piece of legislation come forward.

Where is the protection for not only the part-time workers that might work on a Sunday, those kids that you're talking about, but for the full-time workers? I'd like to ask the member for Wellington whether or not he's heard in his community, as I have in mine, that employers have literally laid full-time employees off and have replaced them with part-time workers so that they can take advantage of the hours on Sundays. I think that we need to look at this issue as well. I know that's been happening, and I know that's been happening frequently in some of the big-time franchises in Metro. I can't speak for the member's riding, but I know it's been happening here. So that's a question I'd like to ask the member. Has that been happening in your riding? I know it has in mine.

I don't see any protection for those full-time workers either in this piece of legislation. I think that the full-time workers have suffered over the last year and that, as I've said, the part-time workers on Sundays have suffered as well, because they're being forced to work. So on one hand, you've got full-time employees during the week even being laid off, being replaced with part-time workers; part-time workers not being properly addressed in terms of protection in the legislation. Where is this? We need to address it.

The Acting Speaker: We can accommodate one final participant.

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): My riding, before this legislation was put forward, made it quite clear to

me that they did not want Sunday shopping in the riding. I personally also felt the same way, so it was really easy to be the representative of that. Then, when we put everything on hold, I have since been struck by the silence in my riding. I only have had basically one of the major retailers come to me and ask me to support it.

I guess my own feeling and sense is that I still am opposed to people having to work on Sundays. I agree with the member for Wellington on that whole issue, that something has been taken away from the family. However, I would ask the member how he would respond to the fact that if this legislation does not pass in this House, then we are left again with the situation that we had before, which everyone in this House has agreed is totally unacceptable. We would then go back to the law that existed prior. I would ask the member to address that issue. I'd be interested in hearing his comments.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Wellington has two minutes in response.

Mr Arnott: I would like to thank the member for Welland-Thorold for his kind comments in response to my speech. I must say that the respect I have for him has grown in the last two years. Despite the fact that I disagree with many of the views that he brings to this Legislature, he continues to take stands based on principle, and that is inspiring, I think, to all members of this Legislature.

The member for Simcoe East was extremely kind, and I appreciate his kind comments as well, and I'd like to return them. He had a number of years of municipal experience in his résumé prior to coming to Queen's Park, and since 1981 he has represented his constituents very, very well. I know he endeavours as best he can to represent the views of his constituents, and I think that's very, very important as well.

The member for Yorkview has asked a question, I believe, if I heard him correctly: Am I aware of situations in the riding of Wellington where employers have laid off full-time staff to replace with part-time staff that would be working on Sundays? My answer to him would be no, I'm not aware of any situations in Wellington, although I'm not 100% sure that hasn't happened, although I assume that he has indicated that has happened in his riding.

The member for Sudbury's question, which was that she inquired what I thought the government should do instead of bringing forward this bill and did I think that the former law was unacceptable: As a matter of fact, I thought the former law was good. It allowed for local tourist exemptions. I think that was a good law, and this is what I have always stated. I think that was probably the best way to handle the issue, not allowing wide-open Sunday shopping, but in certain areas that were entirely dependent on the needs of the tourism industry to be allowed to open Sundays.

2000

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): God's country. My speech starts off—

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): You mean northern Ontario.

Mr Hope: —“Farmers’ Right to Decide.” Oh, that’s a different piece of legislation. That’s dealing with the unionization of farmers, so I’ll leave that one for a little later, which I’d like to get into.

The other one which I’d like to talk about is a little different here. It’s about Sunday shopping. I remember when the Liberals tried doing what they were doing and the effects it had on the workers and workplaces where they were given the municipal option and the debates that took place around that issue, the chaos that was created. I was president of the labour council at the time. I travelled to all the municipalities, made deputations, because in rural Ontario you’re not just dealing with one municipality like you are in one big centre.

Before I start off, I’m going to lay out my personal views. I believe that there ought to be an opportunity for family values during Sundays. I firmly supported that before I was even elected. When I worked in a workplace and negotiated collective agreements, we had a slogan that was called “Ask Me, Don’t Tell Me.”

People wanted the right to choose whether to work Saturdays or Sundays. They wanted that option available to them because they wanted the availability. If they had an extra bill that came into the family, they were able to work and able to have the extra money to pay for the bill, whether it be car insurance or other insurance as it came due for the house, or whether it be just to buy a new pair of skates for the boy who was going to play hockey, or the girl who was going to play hockey. It was very important for the option to be there for the individual to work for the extra money that might be there.

But when I started looking at this law, I started to have serious reservations. I’ve seen the petitions for and against.

In the town of Wallaceburg, the municipality held a vote on it. The people there who voted were in favour of Sunday shopping. It’s a boater community in the summertime. A lot of people from the States come across and come over to the community. A lot of the businesses and a lot of the people who work there—because not only businesses vote in municipal elections, but people, residents of that community—thought it was important for the prosperity of that community.

In the city of Chatham they didn’t even conduct a vote. They just refused to deal with it and let the employers deal with their situation.

This has now been in place for a while. I still have the opportunity to travel, as I’m travelling between events on Sunday, as some of us do still have to work

on Sunday. When I travel to events, I still notice that a lot of people are shopping. It’s their option and their choice. I have not heard major confrontation from workers about this issue.

As I started to make sure that I could reflect the views as a member of this Legislature on behalf of my constituents, I have had to set my personal feelings aside and reflect those of my community. If I look at the town of Wallaceburg, Wallaceburg says they are in favour through a municipal election process. If I look in the city of Chatham, during the summertime, again we have American boaters who travel up the river to visit our area. Also we have a number of tours that go on because we are the black central community in our area with the underground railroad, and a lot of Americans do come over. But that community in the city of Chatham where they stay overnight is not a tourist area, but Dresden, which is about 15 to 20 minutes away from the city of Chatham, has that tourist attraction.

What I’m starting to understand in talking to a number of employers that are in my community and also a number of unionized workers, as I had the opportunity—and I commend the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union for their contributions that they make not only to representing the workers but also to the broader community in the fight against leukaemia, in the search and research that is there for leukaemia. But I had an opportunity during that walkathon, as we were walking the street together, to talk about this issue. They were saying that their collective agreements do provide that.

One of the messages that they’ve been sending out to those other employers who do not have collective agreements by unionized workers is, “You have to be careful, because under Bill 40, if you upset the majority of the apple cart, the majority of the workers, they will have the availability to organize through a collective process which will allow them, under their collective agreement, to have that freedom of choice.”

There are provisions, and I think the provisions that are in the Employment Standards Act are there, but the general public do not understand what they are. I think it’s important on behalf of the government to make sure that we send that message out and inform people about their actual rights in the Employment Standards Act, because it’s not only dealing with Sunday but all issues under the Employment Standards Act. I believe a lot of workers don’t understand what their rights are as employees in the province of Ontario. I think it’s our responsibility as a government to make sure.

I’ve heard the confrontation from my police services board. The police services board’s saying: “How do we enforce it? There’s no enforcement mechanism.” I find it very ironic that the Tories are somewhat opposed to it, yet they stand strongly in support of bicycle helmets, and at the same time it’s a very difficult situation to enforce. Yet they use the enforcement. There are a

number of questions that are facing municipalities.

In listening and watching what's been going on in my own community, outside all the other issues that people have been dealing with, I find it hasn't detracted from the family quality. I continue to refuse to shop on Sundays. So does my wife, my children. We all make sure that we don't shop on Sunday. That's our time and it's our choice to make sure that availability is there.

I believe that if we make sure that workers are protected through trade unions or through the law that is simply here and an enforcement mechanism that is appropriate, I'm sure that we can put the enforcement mechanism around family quality.

Some people are faced with choosing family quality or actually making ends meet, and some families need the opportunity for additional revenues in order to help pay for the bills, help provide for the families, because kids do grow, and if you have a million-dollar family, a daughter and a son, you'll know what the expensive costs are, because I'm faced with that myself.

As I've been through this, and listening to the people in my community, let me tell you, it has not been a major issue. This has not been a major issue that has exploded and kept exploding all during this period of time. The people in the township of Dover, which is represented by a good government there, don't have a problem there. The stores close. Family value is also alive in the small business community. In the town of Dresden, it's not a big issue with them. It's been very quiet. Workers haven't complained; store owners haven't complained, because the family value aspect in rural Ontario is still maintained. They may be businessmen, but they still carry family values.

As I look in the town of Bóthwell, which is also a part of my constituency, if I listen to the people and the concerns that are there, made up of family value and quality of life, they have no problem with what's going on today. I believe if we open up another can of worms and turn up the public one more time, they're really going to ask the serious question about government in general, not of any political party, but of government as one identity in itself and what it's trying to do and accomplish.

People always ask for the right to choose, and I firmly support that opportunity for the right of choice. I supported the right of choice for individuals around abortion issues. I fought for the issue of the "Ask me, Don't Tell Me" clause during the workplace fights that I took on on 40-hour work weeks and voluntary overtime, and I continue to pursue that right of the volunteer aspect, of both the small business community and the larger businessmen who are dealing in the larger malls. There is protection. I heard from our downtown mall merchants that they were being forced by the owner of the mall to open on Sunday. There is an avenue there that allows them the opportunity not to open, and the choice is there for those chain stores that are family-

owned to make sure that they cherish what they need.

But I also know that they're business people. They also do pay attention to the marketplace. They also do pay attention to the needs of the workers in the smaller settings. The larger settings, which we were talking about, are represented mostly by the UFCW, which is a good trade union which I believe will represent its members to the best of its ability.

I'm saying, on behalf of my constituents, whom I've heard very loud and clear both for and against, I believe it is only my right to reflect their views in the vote that will be conducted on this piece of legislation. That vote will be to support my community in supporting this legislation, because I've listened very closely to their concerns. I have my vote, which I cast, which was a no, but I'm going to carry the vote of my constituents in this piece of legislation, which says yes.

I thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. Hopefully, I've respected the rural life of rural Ontario, I've respected the views of my community and I will respect them come the vote of this Legislature.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Any questions or comments? If not, is there any further debate?

2010

M. Poirier : Aujourd'hui, le 15 juin 1993, nous voilà en train de débattre en deuxième lecture le projet de loi 38, de son beau nom, la Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jour fériés dans le commerce de détail en ce qui concerne l'ouverture des commerces le dimanche. Deuxième lecture, 15 juin 1993, en train de la préparer. Première lecture, 3 juin 1992 — pas 1993, mais 1992, il y a déjà plus d'une année. À ce rythme-là, on n'est pas près de passer grand nombre de lois. Quelle perte de temps, quelle perte d'énergie quand on pense que pendant cinq ans, lorsque j'étais au gouvernement, on a entendu les plaintes du NPD.

En juin 1991, ils nous amènent le projet de loi 115, en juin 1992, ils nous amènent le projet de loi 38, et en juin 1993, on n'a pas encore complété le débat sur le projet de loi 38. Mais finalement, le train NPD arrive en gare — pas trop vite mais il arrive en gare. Quel cheminement, quelle soi-disant gestion de dossier, mais, surtout, quelle frustration et quelle patience. Quel carrousel de politique NPD à ce sujet.

Quand j'ai été élu pour la première fois à l'Assemblée législative en 1984, le gouvernement conservateur était toujours au pouvoir, dans sa 4^e année. La loi à ce moment-là, vous vous rappellerez, était aussi trouée qu'un bon fromage emmenthal. Et vous, qui êtes gastronome, Monsieur le Président, vous savez bien que ce ne sont pas les trous dans le fromage qui donnent le bon goût au fromage emmenthal. Il y a autant de trous dans cette loi-là que dans un bon fromage.

Tout le monde se définissait «touristique». Tout le monde avait changé la définition du dictionnaire Robert,

du Larousse, du Harrap's, de tous les dictionnaires à l'échelle de la planète, mais surtout en Ontario, pour se dire «touristique». Moi, qui aidais à lancer une association touristique, je trouvais que ce jeu de mots était absolument hilarant.

Lorsque les libéraux sont arrivés au pouvoir en 1985, on s'est engagé à boucher les trous, à fermer les échappatoires, à corriger les lacunes et à rendre plus raisonnable cette loi-là que tout le monde s'amusait à ne pas respecter. Nous avons écouté la population de l'Ontario et nous avons présenté un projet de loi qui, je crois, à ce moment-là, reflétait bien la polarisation des opinions qu'on pouvait trouver et qu'on peut toujours trouver en Ontario.

Mais, pendant les cinq ans que j'ai passé dans le banc du gouvernement libéral, de 1985 à 1990, je n'oublierai jamais les attaques en règle de l'opposition NPD qui nous disait qu'on n'avait pas de moralité, qu'on n'avait pas de cœur, que nous étions antifamille, que nous étions antitravailleur et antitravailleuse, qu'on ne comprenait rien etc.

Mais lorsqu'ils sont arrivés au pouvoir, on aurait pensé que tout de suite ça a pressé de corriger ces épouvantables lois et conservatrices et libérales. Mais, bien non. On s'est préparé à avoir de grands changements. Le NPD arrive et dit : «Il faut consulter la population. Il faut faire des audiences publiques.» Et en privé, ils nous disaient, «On ne sait pas trop exactement quoi faire, donc on va gagner du temps en attendant que les grands prêtres dans le bureau du premier ministre puissent pondre un document et nous dire qu'est-ce qui va arriver avec un projet de loi sur l'ouverture des commerces le dimanche.»

Je n'oublierai jamais mon temps au sein du comité législatif sur l'administration de la justice, qui avait reçu le mandat de tenir ces audiences publiques-là pour connaître l'opinion encore une fois du grand public de l'Ontario. Je n'oublierai jamais avoir fait 25 villes en 25 jours, avoir écouté des douzaines, sinon des centaines de présentations ou voir monsieur le président ou madame la présidente de la chambre de commerce locale venir nous dire, «Messieurs et mesdames du comité de l'administration de la justice, le mémoire que nous allons vous lire aujourd'hui, c'est exactement le même mémoire que nous avons lu au gouvernement conservateur à telle date, au gouvernement libéral à telle date, et maintenant à vous, le gouvernement NPD aujourd'hui, le même document, excepté que, par respect, nous avons changé la page couverture pour refléter la date d'aujourd'hui en 1991.»

Je me rappellerai également tous ces syndicalistes, des gens qui sont venus appuyer le principe de la fermeture des commerces le dimanche. Je ne partageais pas leur opinion nécessairement, mais à travers les semaines et les mois que nous avons parcouru l'Ontario, j'ai appris à respecter et à beaucoup apprécier la sincérité, les inquiétudes que ces gens-là dans les différents

syndicats avaient à l'égard d'une loi à venir du gouvernement NPD. À ce jour, je les respecte et je veux leur dire ceci.

Mais, par contre, mon sixième sens me disait qu'il y avait peut-être matière à s'inquiéter parce que, comme dirait Plume Latraverse, ça brosse à gauche, ça brosse à droite. On n'avait pas moyen vraiment de savoir si le Jello NPD était pour prendre d'une façon ou d'une autre, face à l'ouverture des commerces le dimanche.

Mais je savais des indices que c'était dans le bureau du premier ministre que ça se déciderait. Mais lorsque la loi NPD est arrivée en juin 1991, le célèbre projet de loi 115, je n'aurais jamais pu imaginer que cette loi NPD serait encore plus libérale que la loi libérale que mes collègues, mes bons amis NPD, ont pris cinq ans, lors du gouvernement libéral, à faire tomber, à planter, à critiquer, à nous accuser de tous les noms d'oiseaux. Très intéressant.

Donc, le projet de loi 115, le premier jeu de ping-pong politique de philosophie NPD, est adopté en décembre 1991. Mais, imaginez-vous la surprise de tous leurs appuieurs traditionnels, mes bons amis syndicalistes, auxquels j'ai fait référence tantôt. Imaginez leur surprise quand il n'y avait aucune journée de pause commune dans le projet de loi. Imaginez-vous la surprise lorsque ceux et celles qui voulaient ouvrir leur commerce lors des jours fériés devaient se faire accepter au plan local et se faire définir comme «zone touristique». Quel cauchemar de retour, de déjà vu, de recul vers l'ancienne loi conservatrice que nous avons corrigée en 1989.

Je vois encore toutes ces définitions de «zone touristique». Quelle fertile imagination que j'ai entendue lors de ces mois-là. Puis maintenant, en juin 1992, première lecture du projet de loi 38 que le gouvernement NPD nous propose. Mais cette fois-ci, les commerçants peuvent ouvrir les dimanches. Ceux et celles qui auraient réussi à convaincre leur municipalité qu'ils étaient dans une zone soi-disant touristique auraient gagné la loterie et pourraient ouvrir les jours fériés s'ils avaient rencontré les soi-disant normes locales des Disney touristiques.

Un point heureux toutefois : ceux et celles qui ont un commerce dans un centre commercial, peu importe ce que dit le bail actuel, pourront rester fermés les dimanches et les jours fériés en dépit de ce que dirait le bail commercial en vigueur. Merci, mon Dieu.

L'autre aspect, et mon collègue de Wellington y a fait référence, et d'autres également : la rétroactivité de la loi au 3 juin 1992. Au moment où on se parle et depuis le 3 juin 1992, toutes sortes de commerces ont été ouverts, sans même que la loi ait été passée. Moi, la tête me tourne en pensant à toute la frustration des policiers et des policières à essayer, juste à l'arrivée de cette première lecture du projet de loi 38, à faire respecter l'ancienne loi : les visites des commerces, le temps perdu, l'argent perdu, les amendes, les appels, les jours

en cour, la frustration des propriétaires tels que M. Magder à Toronto même ici, et tout le travail du comité d'administration de la justice qu'on aurait, ou presque, aussi bien de ne pas faire, puisque le gouvernement NPD n'a vraiment pas écouté la population.

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Mais ce qui m'inquiète c'est que maintenant, si la loi passe, qu'est-ce qui arrive aux propriétaires des dépanneurs, des magasins des dépanneurs ? Il y en a certains qui m'ont contacté, et à force de consulter mes collègues, je m'aperçois qu'il y a plusieurs dépanneurs qui souffrent de l'arrivée de ce projet de loi 38, parce que, avec l'ouverture des grands commerces les dimanches, c'est évident que les petits commerces des dépanneurs semblent être particulièrement affectés.

Lots of the small corner grocery stores are being hit very hard by this proposed Bill 38. I think we know what the solution would be, sir. I come from an area in which culturally we live right next door to Quebec and we see a lot of the corner stores being able to sell beer and wine on Sundays, in the evenings and on holidays, and as far as I'm concerned, we never saw anywhere that there were statistics to prove that if you make it more available, you will get more consumption and more abuse. As much as I share MADD's and SADD's programs and others' programs to hit hard upon those who abuse consumption, let us not confuse availability, consumption and abuse.

This is why I would invite my colleagues in government, if they care about the small corner store, to be able to let them have the sale of beer and wine in the corner stores. Come next door to Quebec, it's quite okay. I would hope that you would do it, but I doubt that you will do it because that would make too much common sense to give an edge to the small corner store owners to help them fight off the openings of the larger grocery stores in the same neighbourhood. But I invite you to think about it.

My colleague Don Boudria, my predecessor, who was in the House before 1984, had put forward that bill—

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): He's now in the House of Commons.

Mr Poirier: He's now in the House of Commons, of course. He left and I took over. A minute of silence for Prescott-Russell, I presume. But he brought that forward and it got promptly defeated, and I pushed the government between 1985 and 1987 to do it, and it got defeated with the help of the now NDP government party and the Tories then.

Mr Perruzza: Where were you on the local option?

Mr Poirier: On the local option? At that point I supported it, but now I will support Bill 38 because I believe in free enterprise and I believe that the owners of businesses should get the opportunity to open on Sundays. But what I want you to do, and I will support you in this also, is to make sure that you have provi-

sions to protect those workers on Sundays and holidays to make sure that the employers respect their right not to work on Sundays and on holidays. I will support you on that because there should not be abuse of that aspect.

Ontario is sufficiently diversified and has advanced very much in the last two years in its philosophy towards Sunday shopping, and I can only encourage you to make sure that this protection of the workers happens because, like I said earlier in French, when I sat on the administration of justice committee to study this dossier, I got to know very well, to respect very well and understand very well the concerns that the workers had about Sunday shopping and opening on holidays. I could relate to what they were saying, I respected what they were saying and I can understand their concerns. I got to know some of them very well and I salute them today. I want to thank them for having come forward and having said in such a clear, consistent and respectful way that they did not want any Sunday working or Sunday shopping, and I respect that.

But I think if you're going to do what you're doing with Bill 38, you've understood that Ontario's come a long way or else you would not have changed your minds. I'll support that. I will be voting in favour of Bill 38, but I remind you that I will be watching to make sure that your government really protects the workers. No owner should abuse this law on the backs of the workers, but since you're doing this, you should also respect the right for business people to be able to determine themselves whether they want to or not, should or should not, can or cannot, must or must not open on Sundays and, if they're so-called touristic, on holidays.

But I wish you luck also with this tourism designation aspect, because if you look at the dictionary definition, like in the Tory days, with all due respect, when they had a so-called "tourism" designation, you're going to end up having the same ridiculous problems because everybody's going to make their own blanket and call themselves "touristic zone." I remember, when I sat on the administration of justice committee, all the weird, wacky and Monty Python definitions of what a tourism section was. You will have to deal with that and I wish you luck.

The past solicitors general and the current Solicitor General are very honourable people. I guess you will have to explain to your own supporters why and how you got to change your minds on this, but then that's your problem, not mine, and I wish you luck. From what I've seen of their reactions, they're waiting for you around the corner. I won't be there; you will be there, but I'll be generous enough to support you with Bill 38.

Interjection: Where are you going to be?

Mr Poirier: I'll be in the House and I'll be voting for Bill 38, believe me.

So in 25 words or less, this is what I want to tell you, but I really wish we could have decided something like this a heck of a long time ago. When I see from year to year the delays in bringing this forward, I'm sure, Mr Solicitor General, it's not your point. You weren't responsible for delaying it like this. I'm sure you wish you could have been named Solicitor General back in the fall of 1990, and of course it would have been your own decision. You would have brought it forward so quickly that we wouldn't have had a chance to bat an eyelid. But I support Bill 38. Please consider help for the small corner convenience store owners. They're taking a heck of a kicking, and don't ever forget the workers.

Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Mr Perruzza: I'd like to commend the member for being clear in his position, a position which I can quite readily and fundamentally accept and respect. But I have to tell my honourable colleague from the Liberal Party that I haven't found his position to be consistent with the position of many of his caucus and many of his colleagues.

I have to tell you that when I was on municipal council and during its mandate, it opted to deal with this issue based on the principle of a local option. What that essentially meant was that they didn't have to make a decision; they didn't want to make a decision; they just simply passed the decision-making on to another jurisdiction, on to municipal jurisdiction. You know the kind of hodgepodge and the kind of ridiculousness associated with that particular position, because you're pitting one municipality against another municipality in terms of their rules with respect to Sunday openings, with respect to Sunday shopping.

2030

So when he says "protect the small convenience store," what that particular position would have done is in fact pitted one small convenience store against another convenience store, and those two stores could have been metres apart, just on the other side of the street, as long as they were in different municipalities which essentially had different rules. I find that kind of position, that kind of inconsistency, completely unacceptable and I respect the member for standing in his place and saying he's going to support this now. I'm not, but he will.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Lanark-Renfrew, I apologize for not having recognized you first.

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I just want to take a short time to express my views on this debate, because really it seems to me to be a complete waste of time. This bill has been debated and debated a year ago. It was out to committee. The people had a chance to come in and express their views to committee and I thought the public turned out very well.

I don't see this bill as a Sunday shopping bill. I see it as nothing more than whether I have the right to open my store on Sunday. If you give me the right to open my store on Sunday, that doesn't mean I have to open. That doesn't mean if I do open it, you have to leave your home or your family and come and shop. That doesn't mean that you have to stay away from church because my store is open.

I don't understand why we're spending so much time trying to regulate people's habits. They really are quite capable, in my experience, of regulating their own family lives. If they want to take time on Sunday to take their family and stroll through a shopping centre that's open, that doesn't say they're even going to shop. They're probably using it as an outing, a time together, and the only place they may use is the dining facilities or something like that.

As far as being concerned about the people who are going to have to work on Sunday, I have to question "have to work on Sunday," because the workforce out there is such that their working on Sunday would be of choice.

Hon Mr Wildman: I'm intrigued by the comments of my friend from Lanark in response to my colleague from Prescott-Russell's comments. I find myself largely in support and agreement with my friend from Lanark except for the last remark he made with regard to the workers and the need for protection for workers.

I want to congratulate my friend from Prescott-Russell for his remarks. I note that he says that he will be supporting the legislation and that he has wondered how the members of this party who might support the legislation will explain this to supporters. I would say that the same goes for just about everybody in this House who might support the legislation, considering the positions that have been taken by previous governments, whether they be Liberal or Conservative, with regard to this legislation and how we deal with regulation of Sunday shopping. It has been a conundrum for all governments and it has been difficult for us to deal with the need to protect workers, the need to provide choice and the particularly difficult issue of tourism and tourism designations.

The Liberal Party, when they were in power, tried to have local autonomy, to leave it to the local municipalities to make a decision. Prior to that the Conservatives, when they were in power, attempted to have a tourism designation, and this government also attempted to have a similar approach. All three we found to be really unworkable and problematic when it came to the courts.

Frankly, it's time we left it to the populace, I believe, to make these decisions, and I support my friend from Prescott and Russell and I agree that we must indeed look at how we can protect workers who want to have a choice, just as shoppers and store owners will have a choice under the legislation.

Mr Mammoliti: In response to the member for Prescott and Russell, I'm going to disagree with you and I'm going to disagree with you on the basis of what you've said and you said more in particular at the end of your speech.

You talked about the government paying particular attention to workers and making sure that this legislation protects the workers. I want you to point out to me where in this piece of legislation we are guaranteed protection for the workers, because even though there is a small clause in the legislation that would help workers, I know for a fact that workers are being forced to work on Sundays.

I don't understand how you, on one hand, can say, "I'm going to support Bill 38; I'm going to vote for it," and on the other hand say, "but please make sure that the workers are protected." I need to know from you where you think the workers are protected if you feel comfortable with the legislation.

That's one of the reasons I don't feel comfortable with the legislation, because I think we could be doing a little more to protect workers on Sundays and this, to me, is very important. So if you can just spend a few seconds in explaining where you feel comfortable with that, I'd appreciate it.

Le Vice-Président : Monsieur le député de Prescott et Russell, vous avez deux minutes pour répondre aux questions et aux commentaires.

Mr Poirier: Just two short minutes for my friend from Downsview.

At this point since it's a free vote, I will not claim to represent my colleagues in the House, no matter which side of the House, and I do not claim to represent a past or current government. I spoke freely from the heart on my own personal position—

Mr Perruzza: And I respect that.

Mr Poirier: —and I have always personally supported the right of business people to choose.

The previous Liberal government decided that it wanted to have a local option, and I could live with that as a compromise for the incredible variety of opinions that we saw in Ontario. There's no way I could have supported closing down Niagara Falls, the same way that I could not have supported opening up completely Lanark-Renfrew or Wellington or—Mr McLean from Simcoe East, what was the name—Gingersnap Junction.

As much as you and the municipal council could not deal with that, I can understand, I respect that, but I wanted through that previous law to respect the local decision of what they wanted.

Mr Perruzza: How could you pit us against each other that way?

The Deputy Speaker: Order. You had your chance.

Mr Poirier: It's not pitting against. You see today

in 1993 some businesses are open, some businesses are closed, and the end of the world did not happen, the world continues to revolve. Some convenience stores are open 24 hours around the clock; others are open 8 am to 11 pm. This is the change, the variety that you will see in Ontario.

As for my friend from Yorkview, I can only hope that this bill will offer protection. If not, you will have to look at the Employment Standards Act to make it more airtight, to make sure that if the workers do not feel protected by this bill—surely they will tell you if they don't tell me—but if they don't feel adequately protected then you will have a mandate to make sure that, one way or another, you find means to protect them.

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I ask your forbearance, Mr Speaker. As you know, I have been a little under the weather lately, but I'm very glad to get up here tonight and to be able to speak about an issue which is one of the outstanding issues that I've had with this government since I was elected in 1990.

At times I must say that the debate in this House gets a little bit rowdy when people are saying things to and fro. I remember sitting on the other side of the House in the government when members here in the opposition would wave a document and that document was the Agenda for People.

2040

I want to say something about that document tonight. I believed in the Agenda for People. I believed in those policies that we set forth in the 1990 election. I went door to door talking to people and I went through the villages and the hamlets through my riding of Victoria-Haliburton and I was speaking to people with pride about those things that I believed in. And those policies that we enunciated, I believed then and I believe now, are policies which would be policies that would help to build a better society in Ontario and give the kind of leadership that is needed in this province at this time and the kind of leadership that we need in this nation.

So when the opposition members in those days brandished the Agenda for People, at the beginning I was angry with that because I believed in that document, but over a period of time, as we began to change policy after policy, I began to feel very uncomfortable about those beliefs that I had put in those policies. And so it is I stand today on this side of the House as an independent member, not happily so, but I am here, despite the honourable member's comments to the contrary, because I believe in those progressive policies that he obviously has forgotten about, that he doesn't attend to any more. One of those policies is the very policy that we speak about tonight, and that is Sunday shopping.

Let me be clear about that particular policy. It seems to me that if there is one thing that was said by the

New Democratic Party that was very strongly said through many years, it was the necessity of establishing a common pause day. I've got to say, in terms of Bill 38, that we have a bill that will take away a common pause day. And it's not a matter of taking any high, moral, religious view on this issue, because I'm not arguing from the standpoint of being a Christian, though I am a Christian, but I am speaking as someone who cares deeply about the social fabric of this province.

My concern is that in the midst of this recession we have situations piled upon situations where people are being hurt by unemployment, by problems in the family because of the recession, so many problems in fact that we have people in our respective ridings who know not where to turn because they can't find jobs. People are losing their homes; they're losing their farms in this province. People are hurting.

To add to this very dismal picture, we choose to introduce a policy which will in effect take away from people the opportunity to spend time with their own family. It seems to me that this policy is a policy which is going to hurt people and a policy which is going to put more and more emphasis on establishing a materialistic society where the basic common denominator is pursuit of wealth.

It's interesting, as I go back in my own mind and I think of the history of J.S. Woodsworth and Tommy Douglas and Stanley Knowles and M.J. Coldwell and I think about the things that they spoke about in the years when they were leaders of the New Democratic Party and the CCF. Central to that was an understanding that it was the role of government to establish quality of life and the kind of leadership that would help people, leadership that would affirm them in their work, affirm them in their lives as human beings, giving them opportunities to serve others, giving them opportunities to fulfil themselves.

Here we have a piece of legislation which essentially says that materialism is truly the basic fundamental reality of our society and that it is more important to allow for commerce to take place, for money to change hands, for people to spend all their time and their livelihood at work, rather than give them the opportunity of having a time of quiet and rest, a time to be with family. And so it is I am against this bill because this bill will do nothing to ennoble a citizen; it will do nothing to ensure that people and families have more rights and more opportunities.

This is not only a bad bill in that it tears the social fabric, but it is a poor bill because it does nothing truly to help small business. In fact, it will cause more and more problems for those small businesses that cannot easily compete with the chain stores. It is easy for a chain store to set up a situation in which it is open on Sunday. It is not at all easy for small operations, either single people or couples or families, to be open seven

days a week, often long hours during each day. So we have a bill, again, which not only tears the social fabric but it also begins to eat away at the fundamentals of small business in our community.

Again, I always believe that when we set forth policy in the New Democratic Party that we did so taking into consideration the needs and the aspirations of small business. Well, we don't see that in this bill, and that is a great concern to me.

As I look across this province of Ontario, I want to tell you, Mr Speaker, two days ago was another plant closure in my riding, another 130 jobs, John Deyell Co. I've been talking to the workers from that company, and I've been asking them what their needs are. They feel betrayed. They feel betrayed by the system that allows for our economic situation to go on unabated. They feel victimized by the capitalist system, which has not in any way helped them. They feel that they have nowhere to turn, that there are no hopes for the future. It is to those people that we need to begin to respond.

One of the ways of responding would be to assure them that we affirm quality of life; that we affirm that families need time together; that we affirm that people need opportunities to be able to spend time, time that will refresh them, time that will give them opportunities to be prepared for the other tasks that they have to contend with in a very dismal and difficult society.

So it is that I will be voting against this bill. It is my hope that this bill will fail. I must say it is one of my many hopes that many bills that are being put forward recently, including Bill 8, the casino legislation, will fail. I have great concern about the continuation of establishing policies which are detrimental to our society, and that kind of leadership we don't need. God knows we've had enough of that in the years past, and we expected more from the government. Indeed, maybe in the future the government might be able to give us more if it changes its direction and if it begins to think seriously about the needs and aspirations of all people.

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): I appreciate the opportunity to rise this evening and speak on this bill. I realize that in response to changing social patterns in Ontario and in neighbouring jurisdictions, Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act, was introduced in the Legislature. I also realize that this was an extremely difficult decision for this government to make. I, however, share the myriad of concerns of others that believe Sunday shopping will, over a period of time, have a detrimental effect on many people's lives. Proponents of Sunday shopping have argued that they deserve the freedom of choice.

Mr McLean: A point of order, Mr Speaker: I rose for the two-minute period, and I don't know whether you recognized me or not. I understand from the clock that the member is going on with his debate.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I asked for questions and comments, and I did not see you. That's the reason why I did not recognize you; as simple as that. You are raising a good point. Often members are standing all over the place, and it's very difficult for the Speaker to recognize if a person is standing up for a point of order or for questions or comments. So if I made a mistake, I apologize, and we will continue the debate.

2050

Ms Murdock: You're doing an excellent job, Speaker.

Mr Abel: I agree. You're doing a fine job. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

As I was saying, proponents of Sunday shopping have argued that they deserve their freedom of choice. However, prior to the introduction of Bill 38, Sunday shopping was not a matter of choice but a matter of law. The Retail Business Holidays Act, like any other act, is law, and we do not and should not have the choice to choose whether we obey certain aspects of the law.

Laws are amended and even deleted from time to time when deemed necessary and appropriate. The proposed amendments to the Retail Business Holidays Act, in my opinion, are neither necessary nor appropriate. Yes, I've been contacted by some constituents who support Sunday shopping. Their reason for support was primarily because it was a matter of personal convenience. I have to admit that, yes, for some it will be a matter of convenience, but at enormous expense to many others.

For many years, variety stores were allowed to open on Sunday because of the very nature of their business and the service that they provide. Sunday sales are vital to the weekly sales of thousands of variety stores in this province. Competition from the major retailers due to Sunday openings has already had a detrimental effect on many of the corner stores.

The province's 340,000 people employed by the major retailers could be and already have been forced, of course through subtle means, to work on Sunday, and no labour laws can ever prevent that. Employees who exercise their legal right to refuse Sunday work could be marked by their bosses as uncooperative and could possibly be subtly punished.

There's absolutely no justifiable evidence that wide-open Sunday shopping will have any significant impact on the economy or reduce cross-border shopping. The reality of the situation is that people will not spend any more money in seven days than they will in six. Sunday shopping will have very little impact on cross-border shopping. British Columbia is a fine example of that. Vancouver area consumers still line up at the US border to cross over to the neighbouring state of Washington.

The real point about Sunday shopping is that even if legalized, it will not play a significant role in solving Ontario's economic woes.

As a final point, Sunday has always been a day much different than those of the rest of the week. It is one day in seven set aside for rest, a day to get away from work and routine, and a time to spend with families. Sunday shopping will, over time, make Sunday just another day of the week and significantly change the lives of many people. For those reasons, I will not be supporting Bill 38.

The Deputy Speaker: Any questions or any comments? Are there any questions or any comments? If not, further debate? The member for Mississauga West.

Applause.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Thank you very much. They're just trying to be nice because I'm the whip back there. This is the latest member—the newest member or the latest member?—of the Legislature.

I wish I could say I was pleased to stand and debate an issue that's been debated for—

Hon Mr Wildman: I wish we could say the same.

Mr Mahoney: Yeah, well, you won't be happy by the time I'm finished; I can promise you that.

This is an issue that's been debated for, let me think, four or five years out of the six years I've been in the Legislature. When are we finally going to finish with this nonsense? When are we going to finally say to the people of Ontario that the interventionist attitude of this government and, frankly, other governments in telling people whether or not they can go out and buy some groceries on a Sunday in 1993 is going to stop?

The attitude becomes one of protecting the workers. I've sat here and I've thought, who works on a Sunday? Most of us do. People don't believe that, but let's face it: We're out roaming around, giving out plaques, kissing babies, shaking hands, doing what we do, working on Sunday.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): And meeting with Hazel McCallion.

Mr Mahoney: And meeting with Hazel McCallion. I do that, let me tell you. I'm not crazy; I see her as much as I can.

The police department: How many police departments take Sunday off so they can be with their families? Of course they don't. They have to work; they have to work a full shift; they have to work just as hard as if it's Monday or Thursday or any other day of the week. Wouldn't it be nice if we could give all our fire departments a common pause day, tell them that we're not going to have any fires, it's Sunday, take the rest of the day off, everything's fine, spend it with your family?

Hospitals: We can't get sick on Sunday. The emerg-

ency department is closed at the Mississauga and the Credit Valley Hospital, because all the nurses and all the doctors are at home with their families having a common pause day. Nursing homes: All of our parents and our grandparents and our loved ones who are in nursing homes, some kind of health care facility—sorry, you just lay in bed there and don't move; it's Sunday. The staff have taken the rest of the day off. There will be no activity. That's it; we're shutting everything down. It's a common pause day. This mentality—

Mr Hope: No football games.

Mr Mahoney: All right, sports games, the domed stadium; the list goes on and on. In 1993 in Toronto the Good, in Ontario the Magnificent, in Canada the Wonderful, we work on Sundays. People need time off, no question. There should be arrangements and people should be able to negotiate in fairness with their workers. I mean, this is not a day and age of slave labour.

Talk to me about some of the people whom the NDP would purport to be their great supporters. Not any more, after all the damage you've done in the labour relations field, in the labour union field. They're not your supporters any more, but does General Motors shut down on Sunday? Does Ford shut down on Sunday? Does Stelco shut down? Does Algoma shut down? Do the chemical companies? Do the pulp and paper mills? Do all of the major industries in this province shut down because the NDP government either decrees it or somebody else decrees it? This is absolute nonsense and it's time that we put this issue to bed.

You might find it hard to believe, as I find it distasteful generally to vote for a bill put forward by this government, that I'm going to support Bill 38, and the reason is that I want to get it out of here. I happen to believe there are a lot of other issues of greater significance to everybody—to workers, to shoppers, to municipalities, to the economic development and growth of all of our communities—than having this government or any government, at a time when the province is in the deepest recession in all of our living memories, almost as deep as the depression in the 1920s and the 1930s—it is catastrophic, economically, and we're sitting here at 9 o'clock at night debating Sunday shopping.

I really, sincerely hope we're going to bring this to a head; we're going to have the vote on it. If it loses, fine, take it away. If it wins, fine, take it away. I'm fed up with it and I believe most of my constituents would say to me: "Get on with the things that matter in this province. Get on with creating jobs. Get on with economic growth and development."

In fact, Sunday shopping creates jobs. I've got two boys in university and another one in high school at home. They need work during the year. They need to have part-time jobs to earn some spending money. Equally as important, you talk about keeping a family

together; what's better for a young person than to have a part-time job so that their minds are active and their bodies are busy and they're not hanging around the malls getting into trouble or going out creating problems and running into the police or doing whatever? Better off that they have a job working at the local mall, working in a retail store, earning a few bucks, learning what it's like to have to fight out in that world.

2100

I have respect, I must say, for some of the members opposite who get up on religious grounds. I have some respect for the fact that a couple of our members in this place are ministers of the cloth and that they believe—even though they work Sundays, which is somewhat ironic. I mean, that's their big day of work. I assume they work all other days too, but Sunday's a pretty big day for anybody in the clergy. So it's okay for them to work, but don't anybody else work.

But I have some sympathy and some respect for them having their views based on moral grounds. They've really, I guess, been educated along the lines that Sunday is the Sabbath, even though—think about this—today you look around this place and you see the multicultural mix, the multiracial, the multireligious mix in this place.

Go to a school and speak to some young kids. I was in a school the other day with a combined group of grades 7 and 8 kids talking about politics and the different things that go on in different levels of government. When you look at the mix in there, there are kids from Hong Kong, there are kids from Pakistan, there are kids from Africa, there are kids from all over the world, and they have different religions. Some of them share Saturday as a pause day, a religious day. Are we going to shut down on Saturdays because somebody ordains that that should happen? Some of them celebrate our traditional Christmas at different times of the year, be they Ukrainians or whatever. There is a huge, broad mix in this great province. That's one of the greatest things about this province, frankly, that we have such a terrific mix of people from all over the world and we are a compassionate society that provides opportunities for people from all over the world.

Sure, we have our problems. We have our problems, and you hear some people say that if we just eliminated all the refugees and the immigrants, we'd eliminate all the problems in our society. I'll tell you, my folks and their folks were immigrants. My wife was an immigrant. We're all immigrants eventually, not too far back in our past, many of us first-generation immigrants to this great province and this part of the world.

So we bring this great mix, this great balance, this great wealth of humanity from all over the world into this province and we tell them: "Okay, folks. You're here in Ontario. There'll be no shopping on Sundays. I want you in bed at 10 o'clock at night. Turn the televi-

sion off by 11. Up at 7 o'clock in the morning. Out and cut the grass. Get that crop going on the farm. You're going to do it our way."

I mean, that's probably next in the NDP government. We're going to have rules and regulations down as to when people have to go to bed. But I'm not being partisan when I say this—at least not too much. I don't know where we get off trying to impose these phoney social values. They're not phoney from a religious perspective if that's what driving your concerns, but from a political perspective they're absolute nonsense.

Let me tell you, I've got three sons. The best thing that my boys can do is when they go to the Erin Mills Twin Arena at 1 o'clock or 2 o'clock in the afternoon to supervise the public skating and make a few bucks or to sweep up in the rink or to work at the community centre or to do whatever it is they have to do. My oldest boy worked at a great tradition. I don't know where Kimble Sutherland is, but he would know this place. You would know the Ceeps in London. My oldest boy worked at the Ceeps—terrific place—slugging a few beers, serving a few sandwiches. He gets the odd shift on a Sunday; nice restaurant. I mean, he needs the money. He needs the money at the Ceeps.

My 20-year-old worked for the Brantford Smoke. I don't know where Mr Ward is. He goes to McMaster, worked for the hockey club. They play games on Sundays, let me tell you. Matthew goes down and he has a job, security or serving some beer or doing whatever, at the Brantford Arena. Those boys need that money, they need that opportunity, they need that work experience, they need that discipline, they need that time to grow up and to learn what it's like to have to get up in the morning and go to work, to learn what it's like to have to push a broom around, which I'm quite sure we all did when we were kids.

So any suggestion that we should close down Sundays in this province really has to go back so far into the Toronto the Good days when they wouldn't allow sports to be played and all of that kind of thing. You couldn't do anything. You would just go to church and get home and start working on the Sunday meal. Times have changed. And you know what? Families can stay together with that kind of atmosphere. That's not a problem. As a matter of fact, I believe it'll help families stay together because there will be less pressure on the young people to bug mum and dad for extra money and less pressure on the young people who might get into trouble because they don't have busy hands and active minds working at a job on a Sunday.

Let me just address it from another perspective. I think it can be a positive thing for a family, and I don't think we should try to pretend that having Sunday shopping is going to destroy the quality of life of our families in the province. But from another perspective, the experience of the small business community, it's

really quite catastrophic what they've gone through, particularly in retail.

We experienced in our own family where we lost a business in the past year due to the recession and due to the problems, and this hits your family in a devastating way. Not only does it cost money—money you can replace—but it costs you a lot of heartache, a lot of difficulties, a lot of time, a lot of tears, a lot of late nights, a lot of anguish trying to figure out how we're going to resolve this problem. Businesses are failing all over this province. It's not due to people's laziness or incompetence. As a matter of fact, Ontarians and Canadians are some of the most resourceful, hardest-working people in the world, in my view. These things happen.

If Sunday shopping could help a retail establishment stay open to earn a few extra bucks, then why would we, as government, say they can't? Because we're concerned about their family? Give me a break. It's a lot harder on their family putting them out of business than it is having them all go and work the store together or do whatever it is they have to do to keep the business alive. It's not just retail; it's every aspect. If you talk to anybody who's involved in a manufacturing business, in a small distribution company, they'll tell you that they go in very often with their spouse on a Sunday and do the books and do the planning for the following week or weeks to come and make phone calls to people who are also in their plants working hard, trying to figure out how they're going to survive this recession.

So the economic development and the benefits of, first of all, government getting out of the business of regulating these store hours, if there's one thing—and I saw the Treasurer; there he is over there—if there's one thing, I say to the Treasurer and to all members in this place, we've got to start figuring out what it is government should be sticking its nose into and what it is government should be butting out of. We've got to start saying: "We're just simply not going to do that any more. We're not going to regulate it. We're not going to bother you with that any more."

We have some confidence that the private sector in this great province is mature enough to understand whether it's economically viable for them to open their darned store or their business on a Sunday. We have some confidence, being the patriarchal bureaucracy that we are here at Queen's Park, that a business person can make a decision whether they need to open their establishment on a Sunday to try to survive, and that workers—sure, workers should be protected, but how about if we give these workers, senior citizens who might want to do a little part-time work, students who want to do a little part-time work, an opportunity instead of trying to pretend that we can shut the province down?

So I say to the members who are thinking in terms of

voting against this that your ideology is of a day gone by. Your ideology is such, and I say it with respect, I say to you I know it's just my opinion and I respect you having yours, but I believe strongly that your ideology and your philosophy on this particular issue is of a day 30, 40, 50 years ago, not 1993, George. Not 1993 when we should all be big enough and grown up enough to let the private sector make their own darned decisions on such a silly matter, and government should be getting out of that particular business.

2110

Every time a Liberal stands up to speak about this, we hear all the catcalls from over here and from over there that we tried to foist a local option upon the municipalities and how unfair it was and everything else. Let me tell you one thing. Perhaps the methodology was wrong. I will admit to that. In fact, many members of my caucus in the former government know that I feel that way. Perhaps it was wrong because we didn't go there first and say: "We want to do a local option. Work with us on it." Instead, we announced it in the House and sprang it on the municipalities. They don't like to be surprised. This government should know that better than anyone because the municipalities are now being surprised—

Mr Perruzza: Oh, that is what it was. It was a surprise. Oh, it was a surprise.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Downsview.

Mr Mahoney: —by all of the problems of the deficit brought in by this Treasurer. Don't worry, Mr Speaker; I can handle him. All the problems of the deficits by this Treasurer are being downloaded down to the municipal level.

Mr Perruzza: Oh, it was a surprise. That is what it was.

Mr Mahoney: Now, they don't like surprises, and I don't blame them. I was a municipal councillor for 10 years—his blood pressure will go down. You're going to have a stroke over there. Just relax.

I was a municipal councillor for 10 years and I didn't like the surprises, let me tell you, that my friends to our left geographically, to my right philosophically, used to spring on us all the time. They used to come down from on high with these great diatribes, and they'd pass on all these new pieces of legislation and regulation. You'd open the envelope and you'd go, "Here's something from Queen's Park," regulations, legislation. Funnily enough, there was never a cheque in there. We used to look in there all the time and there was no money. There was all this stuff they wanted us to do—you know that, Anthony—all this stuff that these guys wanted us to do. They never sent the cheque. Strange stuff. They started that. The Conservative Party started that.

You guys are showing that you almost learned sitting at their knee how to put it on down, and you, Mr

Minister of Municipal Affairs, should be ashamed of yourself for allowing this government to perpetrate the fraud that they're perpetrating on the municipalities. You should be ashamed of yourself. The Minister of Municipal Affairs should have the courage to stand up and fight for those people at the municipal sector and tell your Premier to stop passing on all his problems to their particular level.

In the spirit of non-partisanship, let me get back to the issue of the local option. Before the Liberal legislation came in, I was on municipal government and regional government, region of Peel, city of Mississauga, with Hazel McCallion. I have to say that because she might be watching. By the way, my mother-in-law is watching, so I'll just say hello to Edna. I'll get that out of the way too.

But before that legislation came in, the rules basically said, "No one in the province of Ontario shall shop on a Sunday unless they have an exemption," and then they said how you get an exemption. You go to your regional municipality or, in the case of an area where there isn't a region, you go to your local municipality, and you say, "I would like to be designated as a tourist attraction." It could be a community; it could be a business improvement area; it could be one store; it could be a shopping mall. You would say to your local representatives, "I want to open on Sunday. Designate me as a tourist attraction," and you would do it.

Hon Mr Wildman: I don't think we should designate you as a tourist attraction.

Mr Mahoney: You could designate me as a tourist attraction if you wanted to. I don't know how many rooms or how many people I could accommodate, but I'd be happy to try.

So that's all you did. Let me give you some examples. In Mississauga, the Malton fruit market came before regional council. We designated them a tourist attraction. Now, people who work at the Malton fruit market and own that would tell you that people come from as far away as Buffalo, New York, to shop at the Malton fruit market. The fruit's a little hard by the time they get home, but in any event, it's a stop on a sort of tour that these people make, and they convinced our council that they were indeed worthy of being declared a tourist attraction. Therefore, they were allowed to open on a Sunday.

The Port Credit business improvement area: It is a tourist attraction as a result of the Toronto Star Great Salmon Hunt. It should be the Mississauga News great salmon hunt, but in any event, it is an event, a fishing derby that's worth millions of dollars not only to Port Credit but to all of Mississauga and to Oakville and even Burlington and I guess right around Lake Ontario into the east end; a lot of money. So there's some argument that says that when the fisherpeople come on a Sunday—

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): Anglers.

Mr Mahoney: Anglers. I knew there was a neutral term there. Thank you. A neutral gender term: anglers. When the anglers come on a Sunday and they drop their boats in the harbour at Port Credit, they've got to buy some gear. They've got to buy some hooks. They don't use worms to catch these great big salmon, but they've got to buy some equipment. Maybe they've got to buy some pop or some groceries to take out on the ship—on the boat; it's not quite a ship. Ships ahoy. But they've got to do some shopping. Some of them are ships, believe me. One boat goes out into Lake Ontario and, let me tell you, they would easily, in the Port Credit community, drop \$100 to \$200 in shopping. Imagine if it was closed. I mean, what's the point? The businesses in Port Credit would lose all that revenue, so we in our wisdom at council decided it was a reasonable request for the business improvement area in Port Credit to be open on Sunday.

The coup de grâce in Mississauga, July 18, 1986, was my birthday, thank you very much. It was also the day we officially opened the new civic centre in Mississauga. We opened it on the weekend and we had Prince Andrew and his wife, Sarah Ferguson. Are they still together? I'm not sure. We had them attend and officially open on a Sunday. We declared, we, the city of Mississauga council, requested the region, which we were part of, to allow the city of Mississauga on that day to be wide open for Sunday shopping because we had thousands of people coming to our community to see Andrew and Fergie. We had thousands of people who lived in Mississauga and came from environs outside of Mississauga to help the citizens of Mississauga celebrate opening their new, beautiful civic centre.

Those are three examples where we gave exemptions which were totally in power, totally legal, totally just fine under the legislation called local option. We had an option locally, we decided to exercise it on those three occasions and we had wide-open Sunday shopping on July 18, 1986, and we had wide-open Sunday shopping for the Malton fruit market and the Port Credit business improvement area.

Where is it ever written that any of you, in your communities, should have a right to tell us we can't do that? Where should you ever get the power, if you are on council in Sault Ste Marie, to say that Sudbury must stay closed or must open on a Sunday, or if you're in Sudbury, why should you have the right to tell the good citizens of Sault Ste Marie, who happened to vote in a referendum in the Sault in favour of Sunday shopping, that they can't do it? It's ridiculous.

So our legislation put into place the mechanism that would give the local municipalities the option of deciding, as they've already had it. Now, work with me on this. Before the legislation, no one can shop on

Sunday in the province of Ontario unless you get an exemption. How do you get an exemption? You go to council. After the legislation, no one can shop on Sunday in the province of Ontario unless you get an exemption. How do you get an exemption? You go to your council. I ask you, what was the difference? What was the fuss about? What were you people on this side of the House, when we were over there, going so crazy about? "We're going to destroy the family." What was the difference?

I'll tell you what the difference was. Under the old legislation we simply had to say that it's a tourist attraction. Under the new legislation we didn't have to say any such thing. We didn't have to justify our reasons as it being a tourist attraction, although under the old legislation there was no mechanism for appeal. Now you're going to allow a mechanism for appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board. My goodness. John Sewell must be saying: "Why did you guys give me \$3 million—other than to give me a job—to examine the Planning Act in the province of Ontario, when you're going to start piling these kinds of appeals and decisions on to the Ontario Municipal Board and waste their time?" In reality, and you know as well as I do, that there will be appeal after appeal to the OMB by the people in the religious community or other communities who feel they have a particular right to question everyone else's judgement in this province as to whether they should be able to (a) shop on Sunday or (b) work on Sunday.

You're going to create a nightmare, and that is the part of this legislation that I find terribly offensive and unfortunate, but I'm prepared, in the hope that we can finally put this issue to bed, in the hope that we can finally get on to trying to find a way to come up with some solutions to the mess that has been created through the social contract, in the hope that we can get on to many of the issues—I see the Minister of Labour here. He knows as well as I do how many issues of serious concern, whether it's the agricultural workers—and, by the way, Minister, I'm working on that; I hope to be back to you soon—or whether it's Bill 80 or whatever the bill is, there are a lot of issues that I know he wants to see debated in this place in relationship to the workplace and in relationship to helping workers in this province. I want to share in that debate with him and with other members. We want to get on.

2120

We saw a list today. We debated earlier for two hours the motion about night sittings. There was a list of 25 pieces of legislation that this government wants to put into force and effect in this sitting. I'd like to get to some of those. There are issues of serious, serious concern and impact to the people of this province that we've got to get on with and start debating and start looking at some of the amendments that we'll be putting

forward as members of Her Majesty's loyal opposition and hopefully adopting some of those amendments and recognizing the role that we as opposition members have to play.

Finally, one of the things that is so frustrating to people like myself and, I know, my colleagues is when we debate this issue and we see other issues just being ignored. I see the Minister of Housing here. I asked her in the House the other day if she would take a look at delaying implementation of the regulations amending the building code, regulations that require that insulation in a new home be installed from floor to ceiling in the basement, when in the past we all know that it was only required to be installed to the frost line. The increased cost of that single issue alone to every new home that's built, depending on its size, is somewhere between \$3,000 and \$5,000 per home, Minister.

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): You are wrong.

Mr Mahoney: I am not wrong. I have the statistics to prove it. I have the statistics to prove it and I challenge you to prove me wrong.

This minister stands up in this House and says, "It's not a big deal. It's only 10 bucks."

Hon Ms Gigantes: It is not just a stretch in argument; it is a stretch in truth.

Mr Mahoney: It's on this bill; it's economic development. If they won't do something about economic development—it's a bit of a stretch, but it is. If they won't do something on economic development for the housing industry, then at least let's get on with this and do something for economic development for retail and for the workers who need the jobs.

This minister stands up and flippantly, in an arrogant fashion, says, "It's only 10 bucks a month." Maybe that's not a lot of money to you, Minister, but it's a lot of money to the people who are trying to buy their first homes. It's a lot of money to the builders who have to tell those people they have to increase the prices of their houses. And this kind of attitude is exactly why we continue to debate Bill 38, which you knew I would get back to. It is exactly the same kind of attitude.

There is a complete refusal and a reluctance of this government to understand that the way you get the economy going is by freeing up the private sector. You turn them loose. You tell them they can open their darned stores on Sunday; it's not a problem. You don't send the police around. You don't issue tickets and fine them and take them to court. Think of the amount of money, never mind the fines, that Magder had to pay—or he got off. I don't know what finally you did with that, Mr former Solicitor General. You did something with it. But the cost to the taxpayer alone just to issue those tickets, to have the police go out there on Sunday to take him to court, is absolutely a travesty.

If this government had even the slightest idea, if those members opposite had even the slightest idea of what it means to get economic development going in this province, to turn the private sector loose and say, "We support small business. We believe in hard work. We believe in democratic free enterprise," then maybe we'd get this province's economy going again.

I'm going to vote for this bill in spite of the incompetence of this government.

Mr Perruzza: I've just got to scratch my head in wonder at the sanctimonious garbage that we just had to sit and listen to. I can't believe that he would sit there in his place and with a serious look on his face talk about how this legislation is going to affect workers.

He gave us his boy as an example, going down to the local restaurant, the dining room, how he could work for a few bucks and bring a few bucks home, and how this was better for his livelihood and the rest of it. Well, I say to you that not every boy from every working family in Ontario can afford to be taken down to Florida for two weeks a year to spend together with his family. Not every boy can be taken out to the cottage and spend the weekends at the cottage with his family to develop the family unity.

Despite all of that, despite that, despite those kinds of arguments which undermine some of the fundamental values and some of the fundamental things that hold working families together, I'd like to ask the member a very direct question. He says this isn't important and we should be moving on to the finer stuff. Where was he when his government for five years took provincial expenditures, the budget, from \$27 billion to \$42 billion or \$43 billion? Where was he then? Where were the good-time Charlies when things were booming in this province and they said, "Jeez, what if we get into bad times?"

Where's the training infrastructure that's going to be able to get people back to work and going to be able to get things moving again? Where was he when the government in those boom years needed to make some very direct investments in our infrastructure? I'll tell you where he was. In May 1990, just before they had to go to election, they made a grandiose announcement. I say to you, Mr Speaker, that the sanctimoniousness to stop.

Mr White: I'd like to commend my friend, but I'd also like to clarify a couple of things. This bill is about Sunday shopping, about opening things up for retail shopping and workers, workers who will now be working on Sundays, who previously did not have to. Now, there is a difference.

My friend opposite mentions the importance of working and productivity. He asks, "What about the steel mills and General Motors and Ford?" I can tell you, I've worked at General Motors as a policeman at

that plant, as a security officer, and on Sundays I've gone through those plants. The lights are off. We are talking about miles and miles of plants that are storeys high. On a Sunday, in the middle of the day, they're pitch dark, because no one works at General Motors on a Sunday usually. It's only with productivity that Sunday work is necessary in plants, and productivity is important if one is producing new cars, steel, whatever. We're talking about real work and real economic investment.

But in terms of retail sales, I'm not sure that we need seven days a week in which to purchase shirts. I'm not sure that people have more shirts if they have the opportunity of purchasing them seven days a week. I'm not sure that any real productivity is gained through Sunday shopping, and so I'm not sure that analogy holds, that jobs are created in a substantive way or that any real economic growth derives from Sunday shopping.

Mr Marchese: There was a great deal of puffery coming out from the member for Mississauga West in a number of different areas. He says governments should not be regulating in these matters or over-regulating. I say, if the government doesn't regulate in these matters, who should? Presumably, he's saying deregulate in these matters, as the Conservative and Liberal parties have done in so many other matters. He's saying, "Give the little guy a chance to make it." Well, we know from a lot of little guys and little people out there, men and women, that they're not making it. They are not making it. They're falling apart. But he's saying: "Oh, no, that's not true. Give the little person who wants to make it a chance."

He speaks, in reference to another member from this side or presumably many here, that we're talking about some outdated ideology. I don't know what that is, but presumably he's got a better sense of what ideology he supports. I don't know what that ideology is. I could never fathom, in fact, what a Liberal ideology is. Perhaps in his rebuttal he can speak to the ideology that he represents, because I don't understand it.

2130

Furthermore, he makes additional points. He talks about economic development. He makes reference very tangentially or superficially about that. There are no facts to support that at all. Sunday shopping does not contribute to economic development. There's no evidence for it. It does not create new wealth, it does not create new jobs, and if it doesn't do that, what does it do except to provide—

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): Well, why are you doing it?

Mr Marchese: I'm not supporting it—except to provide the convenience by the many who have to work for the few who want to shop on Sunday. I oppose that. If the argument is simply convenience because of some

modern ideology that people should shop if they want, I say no. I say government should regulate differently. I'll be opposing this bill and I think he's absolutely wrong on this.

Mr Murphy: Sometimes it's difficult to tell on what side of the House we're sitting after I hear the comments from that side. It's quite strange to hear all this opposition from the other side of the House to a government initiative, and I've got to say to the member for Fort York, it's confusing me. I'm more than happy to come over and help you out, if you provide some room, and some of my friends and my leader. We'd be prepared to do that.

I wanted to rise in defence and support of the member for Mississauga West, who—I know the member for Fort York, and we share some common boundaries in ridings. I think of some of the businesses in that community, and I think some of them are doing very well and I think some of them would survive and thrive in the context of Sunday shopping. I know, when I walk down the streets of downtown Toronto and I see those stores open on Sunday, they are thriving happily, it seems to me, providing employment to all sorts of people in the community, in my community and I'm sure in the community of the member for Fort York.

So as I've said before, I support this bill and I think Mr Mahoney, my friend from Mississauga West, has been most articulate in his defence of this legislation. I appreciate the opportunity to intervene on his behalf.

Mr Mahoney: Is that it?

The Speaker: Yes, that is it. The honourable member for Mississauga West has up to two minutes to respond.

Mr Mahoney: First of all, I appreciate the comments. I would tell you that if I needed to rely on this place for friendship, I'd be a pretty lonely guy, but I do appreciate the comment.

Let me just tell you that I think they make my point, the members opposite, because they say, "What is the ideology of the Liberal Party or this member?" Let me tell you something: You don't make a decision on issues like this based on ideology. That's why you guys go around filling up your local councils wherever you can with NDPers and you decide on whether to fill a pothole in a city street based on ideology and philosophy. That's exactly where your mentality is. You think the party is all that matters. I think the people are all that matters. You just don't get it. So that's our ideology, if you want to put it that way.

The question was also asked of me by the member for Fort York, who should regulate? Again, you don't get it. Nobody. We don't need regulations in this modern society about whether or not somebody opens their store on a Sunday. We don't need an appeal

process to take up time at the Ontario Municipal Board because somebody decides they don't like a certain store opening on Sunday. You're going to fill up the courtrooms at the OMB. You're going to waste the time of those people who are highly paid to deal with matters of concern of a planning nature in their local community.

Finally, to the first member, Mr Perruzza—I forget the riding—I hate to see grown men cry, but I understand your frustration in not being able to get your government to move on any kind of a sound economic platform, and I know it's tough. You've got to go home and face the music every weekend.

Mr Sterling: I wanted to talk about this bill, Bill 38, dealing with the Retail Business Holidays Act because I'm very, very much concerned with the process that we've gone through with regard to allowing Sunday shopping. I want to make this point very strongly and I would hope, Mr Speaker, that you might help me in terms of what remedy I, as a legislator in this province, might have with regard to a government which undertakes a legislative endeavour as in Sunday shopping.

I was trying to look through Hansard to find out when the minister said to the public of Ontario that they were no longer going to prosecute people who opened on Sunday, but I believe it was in either November or December of 1991, a year and a half ago, when I believe it was the Solicitor General of the time stood up and said, "We will not prosecute people under the present law of Ontario."

Well, we have Bill 38 in front of us. It's a bill which includes five sections. It is a very, very short bill because basically it's repealing a previous piece of legislation which this government put forward.

In between the announcement in December and June 3, 1992, when they tabled this bill for first reading, the passage of time was five or six months. Now, during that period of time there was a situation in this province where thousands and thousands of stores were illegally open because this law has not been passed. Last Sunday there were the same thousands and thousands of stores which were legally open.

Now, I think there's an obligation on government, when they undertake an announcement like this, to act in the most expeditious way to bring that legislation to this Legislature, present it to this Legislature, and that should be the first item on their agenda. It should have been dealt with, in my view, in either March or April of 1992. It should have been put in front of this Legislature; it should have been passed at that time.

I'm not even certain about the propriety of someone standing up and saying, "We are no longer going to enforce a law of this land." Whether you agree with the law or you disagree with the law, we had this government unilaterally stand up and say: "We are going to

change the law of the land today. It's done. We've changed the law of the land: We're not going to prosecute people who open on Sunday."

This was introduced June 3, 1992. The first debate, the first time of this House that was taken up debating Bill 38 was on, I believe, May 18, 1993, almost a year after the bill was actually introduced.

We have seen a time period of a year and a half pass since a minister of this government stood up and said, "We're not going to prosecute people who are breaking the law."

I don't know what power I have as a member of the Legislature, but I believe in the institutions of Parliament, I believe in our justice system, and I believe our justice system should be protected. I believe that we have to stand up and fight for those institutions even when we disagree with the laws which they are enforcing or putting forward.

We have had a government by fiat. What prevents another minister from getting up tomorrow and saying: "I'm going to change the law on whatever it is, drinking and driving. We're no longer going to suspend licences for people who have been driving while being impaired"? What prevents this government from doing that even though I and the members of the Legislature vehemently disagree with that?

2140

We've got another problem with this government with regard to this piece of legislation. The Premier has made it quite clear that he's going to allow his caucus a free vote. He's got a majority government. It's quite within the realm of possibility that Bill 38 will fall. If Bill 38 falls, and we had a government stand up and say, "We're not pressing charges. We're telling the police not to press charges. We're telling the crown attorney not to bring people in front of the court," I believe that is anarchy. That is basically reaching to the point of a cabinet minister acting outside his authority. If in fact the government can't go to its own caucus and say, "We have to have this vote because a year and a half ago we said this law was no longer in place," I think that there's a very, very difficult problem here with regard to how we rein in any future government as to what they might want to do vis-à-vis a whole variety of different kinds of laws which we have in this province.

I find a great deal of difficulty with what has happened here with regard to the speed with which this government has brought this bill to the Legislature. They introduced it on June 3, 1992, after announcing it some five months earlier. They appeared to have no concern about the dispatch with which they brought it to second reading. The government is basically fiddling with the justice system. They're basically saying there's a law on the books, but there's not a law, and it hasn't passed in this Legislature. Yet the Attorney General, in

my view, or the Attorney General of the day, had no business telling his people not to prosecute, and the Solicitor General of the day had no business telling the police not to lay charges.

I have a great deal of concern with the process herein. I guess the bottom line of all this is, if this bill should fall, does this go to the confidence of the government? Does this bill go to the confidence of the government? Because we have gone a year and a half without laying charges under this law. I know it's not a money bill. I know it's not a bill which is normally considered confidence in a lot of parliamentary circles, but the argument I'm putting forward and that I want you to rule on, Mr Speaker, is whether or not this bill goes to a matter of confidence.

The Speaker: I thank the honourable member for his contribution.

Mr Sterling: Mr Speaker, I asked you a question.

The Speaker: What's your question?

Hon Mr Wildman: He asked if this is a matter of confidence, and I say no, it isn't.

The Speaker: The member for Carleton asks an interesting question. It's not one which the Chair can provide an answer to, and indeed the question he asks is one that probably is more appropriately placed during question period. He has been given the floor and he has still 20 minutes and 30 seconds with which to make his remarks.

Mr Sterling: I would beg to differ, because what I'm talking about here is that you, Mr Speaker, are here to protect the Legislature, the rights of this Legislature and each member of this Legislature. My whole argument is that we have seen a year and a half of time when charges have not been laid. The laws of Ontario, as they are on the books, have not been followed. They have not been followed because the Premier, the Solicitor General and the Attorney General have said, "We're not going to follow the law." Then with no dispatch, no, they did not come to this Legislature at the first opportunity and say to the Legislature, "We did this because it was necessary for expediency's sake"—and perhaps in past times we have from time to time had a Solicitor General or an Attorney General say, "This law is impractical" or, for whatever reasons, "We're going to change the law."

We now have a situation where I'm caught as a member of the Legislature, I'm here a year and a half later, and I don't know whether to vote for this bill on the basis of the principles or what my constituency wants or if I vote for this bill on the basis of upholding the justice system, because what we have done is, we have said this law is gone. We've said to the people out in Ontario: "This law is done. It's dead; Sunday shopping is legal." That's what the people of Ontario believe.

If I vote against this bill, and this bill doesn't pass, I

will shake the confidence of the people of Ontario, in this place and in the Legislative Assembly. Consequently, as a matter of the duplicity of the actions of the Solicitor General, the Attorney General and this government as represented by the government House leader, I have no longer a free choice as to whether or not I should vote for this bill because I'm caught in another conundrum altogether, which has nothing to do with the issue of Sunday shopping.

I'm asking you, Mr Speaker, is there no kind of obligation on the government to ever bring legislation when they want to change the law? This has gone on for a year and a half and there hasn't been any kind of push by this government to get the issue on and over with, and I guess the bottom line is, what happens if this bill goes down the tubes?

I would say to you, Mr Speaker, is it not a matter of confidence of this government? Did the ministers not stand up to the public of Ontario and say, "The law has changed"? And therefore the confidence of the people, the confidence of this Legislature has to be such that it's no longer there in the government. They don't deliver on what in fact they said.

So, Mr Speaker, I view this as a very, very serious matter. I spoke not long ago with a political science professor, Professor White from the University of Toronto, and I expressed my concerns—

Hon Mr Wildman: Graham White.

Mr Sterling: Professor Graham White, yes, that's right. I expressed my concerns over this bill and the length of time that had gone on from the time that this government said, "This is no longer a law" and what they had done to put their words into law and bring it in front of this Legislature and get it passed into law, and he was very much concerned about it because Professor White said to me that it basically gives the government of the day, particularly perhaps in a minority situation, the right to dictate law, to never come in front of the Legislature to have that law passed.

I don't know what to do, Mr Speaker. Do we impeach the government if in fact this law goes down? In fact, what tools do I have as a member of the Legislature to stop this kind of outrageous action without responsibility? Do I have or does a member of the public have any rights to call these people to account or can in fact the Solicitor General, the Attorney General or Premier Bob Rae say, "The law is this, and that's it," and that's the way it ends?

Mr Speaker, I'm greatly troubled by this in terms of the actions of this government. I am troubled by the fact that now the Premier is saying it's a free vote within his own caucus, because I think that that again weakens the resolve of the government to say, "A year and a half ago we said there isn't a law, but now we're saying I'm freeing all my back bench up to vote whichever way

they want," which is what I would like to have seen them say a month after they made the announcement, when in fact all the damage hadn't been done and the public had the idea that there was a law which said that there was wide-open Sunday shopping in this province.

So anyway, I'm starting to repeat my ground and go over it again, but I do think that there should be some remedy for a member of this Legislature to call the government to tune and say, "Listen, if you're going to stand up and say the law is thus, then there's some obligation on you to bring that matter to this Legislature and get the law passed as thus."

2150

Mrs Ellen MacKinnon (Lambton): I'm not even going to pretend to make any comment on the most recent speaker. He is obviously dealing with something that's legal. I'm not of a legal mind, so the expressions I'm going to put out at this time are my own feelings, my own comments.

In my opinion, Sunday shopping is not a case of for or against. You can be for it; you can be against it. It all comes down to one thing, and that is the matter of choice. People should be able to choose if they wish to shop or not shop on Sunday or Saturday or any other day. Employees should be able to say they will or they won't work on Sunday, and if they can't, then let's put the protection in so that's there for them. People should be able to choose for themselves how they wish to spend their Sunday, be it a ball game, be it a movie, be it the beach, be it the church; the list is endless.

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): Be it working in a store.

Mrs MacKinnon: Certainly. They can go shopping or not go shopping. But it is clear that people prefer to choose not to be regulated, not to be legislated. People want the opportunity to make their own choice, and the people in this province are intelligent enough that they can make their own choice. Those who are working on Sunday will do it by choice, not by orders, rules or regulations. If it's by rules and regulations, then for goodness' sake let's protect the workers. But as far as it goes for shopping, let it be by choice. Let the merchants choose whether they wish to be open or closed.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I must rise, on this singular occasion, to agree with the member for Carleton, because I think he's made a very good point. When the head of a municipal council, a municipality, in this province is elected, he or she takes an oath of office. One of the charges in the Municipal Act is to obey and enforce the laws of the municipality. Isn't it a shame that ministers of the crown, of the Legislative Assembly, aren't charged with the same requirement? You must do that. No matter how much you disagree with the law, no matter how much you were opposed to a certain law when it was passed, you must enforce it. It's required by the law. If you disagree with it, you set

about to change it, and you set about to do that as soon as possible.

I must agree completely that the government chose not to ignore the law but to state that it would not enforce the law. I think it's a very sad day, as it was a very sad day when the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the previous minister, decided to ignore the Boundaries Act in the London-Middlesex bill, an act that had been negotiated by the representatives of over 800 municipalities in this province with the then government, the then Minister of Municipal Affairs, with some amendments. That is the law.

So we have two specific examples where this government has chosen to ignore the law, to go above the law. I maintain that no member of this Legislature should ever consider that he is above the law.

Hon Mr Wildman: Just a very short comment. I think it's important to respond to the comments just made and the main remarks of my friend from Carleton. I understand what both of them are saying with regard to legislation being passed in a timely fashion, particularly on an issue like this, and the difficulties that it presents all of us as members of the Legislature when such time has passed and people have gotten used to a situation in terms of the shopping being open, and the position that puts us all of us in, as legislators, in making our decision.

Having said that, it is a little bit far to extrapolate that to suggest that members of the government or any members of the assembly believe themselves to be above the law. The fact is that we were faced with a difficult practical situation with regard to enforcement of a law that the courts had basically indicated was unenforceable. The question was, how do we respond to that situation? The decision was to proceed with new legislation. The decision was also made that it would be a free vote and it would be up to the individual member of the assembly to determine how she or he would vote on the legislation. Of course, in making that decision, it is obvious that it is not seen by the government as a matter of confidence in the government.

Having said that, there is no intention to suggest that we are above the law, any one of us, whether in government or just as members of the assembly, but rather to respond to a very difficult practical situation which has been a dilemma not just for this government but for two previous governments in dealing with the question of Sunday shopping and legislation which in all three cases has been shown, frankly, not to be enforceable.

The Speaker: The member for Carleton has up to two minutes for his response.

Mr Sterling: I want to say that the Minister of Environment, the member for Algoma, has stood up and said the law was unenforceable. I invite the Minister of Environment to tell that to Paul Magder, who had

thousands and thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars levied against him as a result of this law that we are repealing today. I want to say, how do you think Paul Magder feels about the government's actions? All of a sudden one day he wakes up and the fight that he has been undertaking, where the government has been on his tail consistently over the last two or three years, even though two or three doors down from Paul Magder there was a huge grocery store open which was selling everything from groceries to furniture to clothing to hardware to everything else, and Paul Magder, because he's not part of the Chinese community which he lives right beside, all of a sudden is nailed Sunday after Sunday for selling furs on Sunday—Mr Magder, I think, had a very, very good social or political argument.

I think the member for Brant-Haldimand is dead on in saying that this government, by its slow actions of announcing this in December 1991, by waiting to introduce a five-section bill on June 3, 1992, by waiting a full year, from June 3, 1992, to May 18, 1993, to first introduce it for second reading, has in fact acted above the law, and I believe that its actions are unconscionable.

2200

Mr Kormos: First, let me comment on the nature of the debate, because I think this debate has been somewhat distinguishable from the usual course of debate. I think most MPPs, if not all of them, received a letter yesterday or today from a Toronto resident, Shirley Farlinger. Ms Farlinger wrote:

"Dear Member of the Provincial Parliament of Ontario.

"You've been nominated and elected by the people of this province and you're there as their representatives. Speeches should concentrate on amending and moving forward the business at hand." There has been all sorts of conduct, she writes, that she finds entirely inappropriate. Indeed, she speaks of or bemoans the lack of obedience to the Speaker of the House. She writes to members of the Legislature: "You are paid a fair salary. You should give the taxpayers a fair deal."

I hope Ms Farlinger has been watching this particular debate, because I think this debate, other than the occasional bit of backsliding by a couple of members, has been one of the most non-partisan debates that's taken place here in a considerable period of time. Why? Because clearly in the instance of the government caucus, caucus members have been freed to vote according to their interpretation of the needs and wishes of their constituents. What that's meant is far fewer canned fluff speeches and far more addressing of the real issue at hand, which is the one of the need for a common pause day.

It's clear that people in this Legislature aren't in agreement on the issue. It's clear that people in respective caucuses aren't in agreement. I understand that and

I respect that, but I find in the instance of the government, which is, of course, the sponsor of the bill—because the purpose of the bill is to end once and for all any prospect of a common pause day for retail workers here in the province of Ontario. Indeed, the effect of Bill 38—and I know there are people who advocate this—is to create wide-open Sunday shopping.

It's not remarkable that there are people who advocate that, because there have been people who have advocated that across the province and right here in this Legislature for a number of years. What's remarkable is that it's this government, a New Democratic Party government, which would present a bill creating wide-open Sunday shopping, closing the door on any prospect for a common pause day here in the province of Ontario. It's remarkable that it's this government that presents this particular piece of legislation.

Let me put this into something of a perspective. I know that not everybody in the province of Ontario agreed with the proposition that we ought to have, in the interest of fairness for drivers and justice for victims, a public auto insurance system. I know that not everybody in the province of Ontario agreed with that proposition. But the people who did agree with that proposition voted for New Democrats in the last election. You see, there were contrary views. There were people who rejected public auto insurance. There were other parties for them to vote for, and indeed they elected candidates other than New Democratic Party candidates, because I'm hard-pressed to think of a single New Democratic Party candidate during the course of the election in 1990 who did not, as a part of their campaign commitments, promise support for a public auto insurance system.

Similarly, the issue of justice for innocent accident victims: I understand that not everybody in the province of Ontario advocates justice for innocent accident victims the way New Democrats did, and those who didn't agree with New Democrats voted for other than New Democrats. But those who believed that this Legislature had a responsibility to create justice for innocent accident victims voted for New Democrats, because New Democrats—and I can't think of one in the province who didn't promise their voters, their constituents, that they would promote, that they would fight for justice for innocent accident victims.

Not everybody in the province of Ontario has high regard for free collective bargaining, and those who don't have high regard for free collective bargaining and who don't have respect for the rights of women and men in our labour force who form unions and bargain collectively—why, there are any number of people whom they could vote for, but those who had regard for free collective bargaining and who wanted to see the integrity of free collective bargaining maintained, I have no doubt that they were inclined to vote for New

Democrats because New Democrats inherently were committed to the maintenance of the integrity of free collective bargaining.

Once again, common pause day: Not everybody agrees with the proposition of a common pause day. I know that. I understand that. But in the course of the by-election in Welland-Thorold in 1988 and once again in the general election of 1990, a very clear and specific part of my commitment as a New Democrat and as a candidate in those two elections was to support and advocate and fight for a common pause day for retail workers, and I tell you I can't think of a single New Democratic Party candidate, elected or unelected in 1990, who didn't share that same commitment.

Not everybody voted for New Democratic Party candidates. We know that. That's obvious. Those people who weren't advocates of common pause day had people advocating wide-open Sunday shopping whom they could freely vote for, but those for whom common pause day was important as often as not chose New Democrats to represent them here in this Legislature, because New Democrats promised that they would create a common pause day here in the province of Ontario.

This wasn't a new promise. This wasn't something conjured up during the course of preparing campaign leaflets. It was a commitment that had been stated over and over again by New Democrats from the opposition benches, not just for months but literally for years.

My introduction to this Legislative Assembly was in the midst of the debate created by the prior government's, the Liberal government's, attack on the Retail Business Holidays Act. Indeed, I recall being tutored, mentored by the now Minister of Municipal Affairs, Ed Philip, when I sat on the committee as the very newest member of the Legislature, being mentored by Ed Philip in opposition, in opposition to the proposition of expanding retail business openings. I was joined by Mike Farnan, the member from Cambridge, who was as vociferous and articulate and as adamant a proponent of common pause day as this Legislature has ever seen, short perhaps of Mel Swart.

Here we are in this Alice in Wonderland with this kaleidoscope, where the many pieces are never in the same position twice and they float around in that viscous fluid and this looking glass distorts things so remarkably, because we have a government presenting legislation that will end once and for all any prospect of a common pause day for retail workers here in the province of Ontario.

I tell you this, I have no intention of breaching my commitment to the people of Welland-Thorold. And I tell you this: As a result of that commitment, I have no choice. There's no choice but to vote against this legislation which is contrary to everything that every New Democrat in opposition ever stood for and contrary

to everything that the New Democrats in this province ever stood for and, quite frankly, contrary to policy democratically developed during the course of New Democratic Party process at provincial council and conventions.

I consider that to be one of the very important qualities of the New Democratic Party and that is that its policy doesn't come from smoke-filled back rooms or the corporate boardrooms of Bay Street, but it comes from the convention floor as a result of democratic and open debate, just like the convention provincial council this coming weekend in Gananoque, I'm confident, will involve open and democratic debate, and I look forward to that.

So you see, common pause day was important not only to New Democrats but it was important to the people who prevailed upon New Democrats to elect them, working women and men, hardworking women and men, members of families, members of communities across this province.

We made a commitment to the church communities like the church community in Welland and Thorold. I agree with the proposition that Sunday shopping isn't going to end the role of the churches in our communities, but I tell you it's but one more hurdle for their continued positive role of leadership.

We made a commitment to the church communities that we would protect Sunday as a common pause day and as a day for people to participate in the religious ceremonies in communities, Welland and Thorold and others like them and, beyond mere church hours, to participate in the celebration that attends that ritual, be it dinners at St John the Baptist Hungarian Catholic Church on a Sunday evening, because, you see, if those women have to work on Sundays at the Zellers or at the Woolco or what have you, as they are being required to do now, they can't participate in that community event, which is very important to the role of their church in their lives, in their family lives and in the life of the community. You see, I made a promise to the church community in Welland-Thorold, and that is that I would fight to preserve, to create and preserve, a common pause day, and I'm doing my best to keep that promise.

2210

Family: You see, I come from a community, Welland and Thorold, where families are still very important, where people's lives are as complex as they've ever been, where people are working as hard as they've ever worked, when indeed they can work, when jobs are available to them. I tell you, a common pause day is very important to those people so they can spend time with their spouses, with their children, with their parents or grandparents, so they can spend time in fellowship with their neighbours and friends. I tell you, Bill 38, this legislation, attacks that fellowship, that sense of community, that sense of family that so many people

are working so hard to sustain under very difficult circumstances.

I have no doubt that the family will survive wide-open Sunday shopping, but, I tell you, the family is under sufficient attack now that yet more hurdles, more burdens, for that institution to have to overcome are less than welcome and nowhere near desirable.

Workers: The sad reality is that the prospect of any legislation that will prevent retail workers from being called upon to work on Sunday is minuscule. You know it. You're darned right you know it, and every thinking person in this community and in this province knows it. You only have to have a little bit of experience with the oh, so many ways to skin a cat that oh, so many employers can utilize.

I agree there are retail workers out there who are represented by effective and significant trade union organizations like the Retail Wholesale Union and like UFCW, two movements, two representatives of significant numbers of working women and men, who look to this government to keep its promise to create and preserve a common pause day, mind you. They believed us. They believed us when we told them that we would fight for a common pause day. They believed us. Now this government introduces legislation, now this bill introduces Bill 38, which is a complete contradiction of everything the New Democrats have ever said inside and outside this Legislature.

Far more important are those unorganized retail workers, the ones who don't belong to collective bargaining units, the ones who are all that much more vulnerable, who don't have business agents and who don't have shop stewards and chief stewards and who don't have contracts. That's the vast majority of retail workers, and, I tell you, the vast majority of those are women. They don't have the protection of a union, you understand. They don't have the protection of a union. They look to this government to protect them, and this government has failed those unorganized retail workers as much as it's failed—more so than it's failed—the organized retail workers.

I tell you, the introduction of Bill 38 is not a proud day for New Democrats as a government here in the province of Ontario because, you see, those unorganized retail workers are, as often as not, women who work in the supermarkets and in the retail stores and in the big chain stores. They don't have the same power as the bosses; we know that. They needed government to come to their help, to come to their aid, to shelter them from the power and, as often as not—because you're talking about sometimes big retail chains that are just corporate entities that don't have real personalities, that aren't really people.

They're corporate bodies that don't care. They don't care about families, they don't care about community, they don't care about the church, they care about

profits. Those retail workers looked to us for shelter, for assistance, for protection, and we've denied those people that shelter, that assistance and that protection. We have forsaken them.

Small business: Let's talk about small business for a minute, because I heard a whole lot said here about choice. Choice when, by God, during the committee hearings there were those big, big shopping plaza developers, the ones who wanted wide-open Sunday shopping, the ones who really don't give a tinker's dam about a common pause day or about families or about church or about community, who care about profits, where they came to the committee and talked about people's right to shop.

They said, "How dare New Democrats interfere with people's right to shop?" These same big plaza developers told the committee how shopping can be a family affair, how it can be quality time with your children. Of course they want you to take your kids with you to the supermarket or to the department store. Just keep that wallet open. These people have no interest, the big plaza developers, in church, in family, in community. They're interested in the bottom line, the dollars and cents.

Small business: Let's talk about small business, because I tell you this legislation is an attack on small business, real small business which we know and were told so many times by so many people, and it's true: Small business, the new employer in this province and in this country, is as often as not—oh, I don't mean small businesses the way the Canadian Federation of Independent Business means, 200 non-union workers making minimum wage in a sweatshop. I'm talking about the vast majority of small businesses that are family-run service shops or retail shops.

I tell you, even today people down in Welland stop me and talk to me about the small business my grandparents ran over on Crowland Avenue during the 1940s, a small grocery store, or the small, family-run business that my parents ran and that their kids worked in throughout the course of the 1960s and into the 1970s.

You see, these are the small businesses that are already working six days a week, and if they're compelled to maintain their market share to remain competitive against the big chains that have no hesitation in hiring people at minimum wage, unskilled people as often as not, untrained people, when family business is forced to remain open seven days a week to compete, as it is in this current climate, I tell you those small businesses simply don't have the physical and emotional energy to sustain their enterprises.

I've talked to the small, family-run businesses in the cities of Welland and Thorold that resisted for as long as they could until this government in the fall, early winter of last year said, "No, we'll abandon the law, we'll ignore the law and we'll create wide-open Sunday

shopping," even though it hadn't been debated yet in this Legislature.

I've talked to the small businesses that resisted as much as they could, that wanted their families to have Sunday as a day off because they're already working six days a week, that wanted their employees, as often as not just a few, just a handful, to have Sunday off because they're already working six days a week.

But no, to retain their market share in those small communities, so typical of communities here in the province of Ontario, they've now been forced to open Sundays too, so those families have no time with each other. Those small business people, those entrepreneurs who do so much for our communities, our province and indeed our country have no day of rest. That's what wide-open Sunday shopping does to small business, let me tell you.

Go talk to them. Go talk to them yourself. Go talk to Elio DiFelice in downtown Thorold. You know, the cowboy boot shop. Talk to Elio and his children who work so hard six days a week and who are deathly afraid that continued wide-open Sunday shopping could well mean the end of a very prosperous small enterprise, because there's just no way that family can put in any more hours. You see, they're already putting in six days a week. There's just no way that Elio and his wife and his sons can put in any more time because they're not like a Woolco or a Zellers. It's not big enough to hire more, yet it's more than large enough to support that family and their children.

2220

Talk to Pat and Gail Noonan down at George's Home Hardware, down at the south end of King Street, already working six days a week with their daughter, with a couple of employees. I tell you, there simply isn't any more time in their lives to work seven days a week. These people are deathly afraid of the impact of wide-open Sunday shopping because that could mean one more small business shut down here in the province of Ontario.

These folks deserve better than that, especially from this government, because these folks had high expectations of the government. Oh, not bold expectations that were somehow plucked out of air, but expectations that were based on the promises that we made.

They expect government to engage in puffery, of course. They expect politicians to indulge themselves in the more than occasional hyperbole. Why, there are people all over this Legislature who engage in bouts of hyperbole. But outright dishonesty is something that no voter should ever have to expect. Outright betrayal is something that no member of the electorate should ever be subjected to, and it's been going on for too long here in the province of Ontario, and I tell you, people are tired of it. People have had it. They don't want any more of saying one thing then and another thing now.

They want people to do what they said they were going to do. They want people to keep their promises that they made during the course of election campaigns.

I tell you, the Liberal government suffered mightily at the hands of the electorate as a result of its cavalier and uncaring attitude towards working people, retail workers and small business people and its having caved in, as it undoubtedly did, to the big plaza developers and the big corporate chains for whom Sunday shopping means diddly.

I'll tell you what, Speaker, this government wants to amend this legislation to make sure that the corporate offices that own those chain stores have to stay open Sunday too and that the presidents and vice-presidents of those companies have to work Sunday too, instead of being on their yachts up in Muskoka, out on some dock sipping whatever it is that high-priced executives from those corporate bodies sip on a hot, sunny Sunday afternoon in Muskoka. Why then the folks down in Welland might have a little bit of a different perspective on this. But you know, those high-priced executives aren't going to be working Sundays; the hardworking retail workers of the community are.

You know, I'm surprised to hear people in this Legislature talk about the kind of messages they've received over the course of the last several months or indeed even year, because the messages I'm getting as recently as the Victoria Day parade—just a little one, just a little parade in downtown Welland, from up around Page Drive over to the baseball park, a whole bunch of little kids on their tricycles and bicycles, with their parents accompanying them. You know, it was remarkable that more than a few of those people were retail workers who in the course of that brief walk with their little kids on those tricycles and bicycles were telling me about what was happening in the large chains in Welland when it came to retail workers, protection for workers, the right not to work on Sunday. What a crock. It simply doesn't exist.

Like I said, there's more than one way to skin a cat. Every employee has learned that, every employer has learned it as well. The only protection for retail workers is going to be to defeat Bill 38 and return to a system of regulation which ensures that, yes, there is some fairness, because it really is about fairness, isn't it, Speaker? Huh? Fairness. You know that.

It's about fairness for workers, it's about fairness for small business people and it's about fairness for the electorate, because how can this government call itself fair when it introduces legislation which contradicts the commitment that this government and its candidates in the last election made to voting people here in the province of Ontario?

I understand that maybe in downtown Toronto there were people for whom wide-open Sunday shopping means diddly-squat. I understand that. But I tell you,

downtown Toronto is not the province of Ontario, not by a long shot, and I tell you, the hardworking, church-going, family people of Welland-Thorold are far more representative than any condo dweller in Harbourfront. I tell you that right now, Speaker: far more representative of the real Ontario.

Once again, like I said earlier, one of the sad things is when you look out the windows of this building, you don't see any of those workplaces. You don't see any factories. You don't see any farmers' fields. You don't see any unemployed. You don't even see the homeless. They are hidden away over on Yonge Street in the alleyways, hidden by the huge steel, glass and chrome towers of Bay Street. The real Ontario, sadly, is hidden from the view of legislators working in this building, and I tell you, it's important that people reflect about why they're here, who they're representing and the sort of commitments they made.

Not everybody agreed with New Democratic Party policy during the course of the last election. Why, New Democrats received but 38% of the popular vote.

But you know what's remarkable, Speaker? You know exactly what I'm going to say. I know you do. What's remarkable is that within a few short days and indeed well into weeks, this new government had the support, according to the polls, of over 60% of the electorate here in the province of Ontario. What that meant is that a whole lot of people, even though they didn't vote for New Democrats, even though they may not have necessarily agreed with all of the policies of the New Democratic Party, thought that maybe, just maybe, by God hopefully, because Lord knows there have been too many years, decades of aloof, arrogant, disinterested government, why, over 60% of the people in this province, notwithstanding that a big chunk of them hadn't voted for New Democrats, thought highly of this government and I believe had a new hope for a new future and a new style of government and of policymaking here in the province of Ontario.

This hasn't been a bad government. It's been as good as any of the governments prior to it. The problem is, that's not good enough for the people of Ontario, because they expected and continue to expect far more, and I say that this government and its members have an opportunity right now to indicate that yes, it means what it says and individual members mean what they say when they're knocking on that door come election time.

The problem is, what do these same people say next time around, 1995, when they go knocking on doors? How do they distinguish themselves from the other candidates? Good looks alone won't do it; Lord knows I've tried. When they knock on that door, how do they distinguish themselves? Do they tell people that, "Well, here's a politician you can trust"? Do they encounter Diogenes with his lamp and indeed have Diogenes stop

and say, "Behold, an honest person"? Or do they simply become homogenized and become one like the other so that we create a level of cynicism, as there is cynicism now, a level of frustration, and there is frustration now, a level of despair, and there is despair now, because people throw their hands up and say, "It's no use voting for any of 'em, because you can't trust any of 'em to mean what they say or keep their word once they've said it."

Well, I say I'm voting against Bill 38, because Bill 38 isn't what I ever stood for in the course of an election campaign. It isn't what I stood for when I sat and stood and spoke out as a member of the opposition. It isn't what Mel Swart stood for, and it isn't what virtually every New Democratic Party candidate stood for in the course of the last election, and I say it's important for people to say what they mean, mean what they say and by God keep their word.

2230

Mr McLean: I appreciate the remarks from the member for Welland-Thorold tonight. I appreciated when he started off with the letter that he received from Mrs Farlinger. I replied to that letter today, and I thought she made some very good points in that letter and I encouraged her and other people that they should do the same thing, because here we should be debating issues and what's going on in this Legislature. As the member has said, I hope that she's listening tonight.

When this government ran, it ran on a common pause day. The member very eloquently made the issues around that, in that election. What happened? Bill 38 attacks community and family, as he had mentioned. What's going on with regard to the people of this province and what input do they have with regard to Bill 38?

I sat on the committees in this province and I listened to the workers across this province when they were appearing before the committee with regard to this legislation a few years ago. They were strictly opposed to it. The member tonight raised that issue. When I go to Connor Tire Service in the Esso station in Orillia on most Friday mornings and talk to the people at Connor Tire, we have a discussion about what's going on with regard to Ontario.

Those people in the small communities can pretty well tell you what most of the communities feel and what was stated here earlier this evening with regard to this bill that was brought in on June 3, 1992, I believe. It's now over a year. There was legislation on the books. They were not upheld, the laws of this province. This bill has not had second or third reading. It has not had royal assent. Therefore, it is not law. Yet this government continually says to the people, "You can go out and you can break the law." Is that right?

I think the comments that the member made tonight with regard to the input that he's getting from his

constituents—as other members have made the same comments: the member for Carleton, the member for Wellington, and I enjoyed the comments from the member for Brant-Haldimand, I believe, with regard to the comments that he had made with regard to the law.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): I enjoyed the member from Welland-Thorold's comments made this evening. I want to commiserate with him with respect to the matter of a broken campaign promise, and that has repercussions, I'm sure you will understand, for all of us. When a politician breaks his or her promise, when a promise is broken in a political context, we all pay the price ultimately. Our public does not distinguish between parties. Frequently, when it comes to broken promises, we're all tarred with the same brush; it casts aspersions on all of our integrities.

So in that respect I commiserate and sympathize with the member, but I want to disagree with respect to his contention that somehow it is the function of government, through Sunday shopping legislation, to hold our province's families together. I disagree. I think it is a very sad commentary, in fact, if we, in order to keep the families together in this province, are relying on the government to produce legislation which somehow deals with the way they're going to spend their time on Sundays. I would suggest, although time does not permit, that there are many other ways in which our government can lend some value to families and to make contributions in other ways to the traditions of the family and the manner in which time is spent together.

In particular, the member has raised a number of issues with which I can sympathize but, to repeat, the function of government, surely, is not through a legislation controlling Sunday shopping as to bring families together, and I simply cannot agree with that premise.

Mr Sterling: I'd like to comment as well on the member for Welland-Thorold's speech. One of the things that I admire of this particular member is that he's been able to dance along that fine line whereby he's been able to express his own personal opinion and hold to some of his own personal values and live within a government which, as far as I'm concerned, has just about bastardized everything that they stood for before they were in government.

Tonight, when you return home or turn on your radios and listen to the election results that are coming in from Alberta now, which is returning a majority Progressive Conservative government, you'll find that what you in the New Democratic Party in Ontario have done to the New Democratic Party movement across all of Canada is hurting, because you're wiped off the map in Alberta. That's what they're predicting right now. It's unfortunate.

I think the member for Ottawa South puts forward a good point; that is, when so many promises, so many policies which this party stood for, the governing party,

have been so badly broken—you haven't just strayed away from them but have gone completely contrary to everything you stood for before—you really do make it hard on all politicians in this province to stand up in the next election and say anything with any credibility. It is really a sorry state that your party has put forward in its whole reversal on the Sunday shopping issue.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): We can accommodate one final participant. Seeing none, the honourable member for Welland-Thorold has two minutes in response.

Mr Kormos: I appreciate the commentary. Look, I indicated at the very beginning of my comments that I knew not everybody agreed with me, but I tell you, I'm speaking clearly on behalf of a significant number of people in Welland-Thorold who feel strongly about the need for a common pause day; not as the sole nurturer of family, but by God, families have received enough kicks in the butt lately that they don't need yet another obstacle; not as the sole nurturer of the church community, as the churches are quite strong and vital, but by God, they don't need any more hurdles. Again, clearly, retail workers in the context we spoke of do need that very specific protection; so do small business people.

Let me say this, though: I give these comments today as a backbencher, perhaps as pure a backbencher as could come from the government caucus. Why, I believe I'm the purest backbencher here: I'm the only one of 72 members who doesn't receive any stipend above my base salary. That puts me in a very unique position, not only of receiving the lowest income of all my caucus, but puts me in a position where the people to whom I'm beholden are the people of Welland-Thorold.

Like I told you before, I know the Premier can put people in or out of cabinet, but the people of Welland-Thorold put me in or out of this Legislature. I know the Premier's office can put people in or out of nice-paid positions, but I tell you once again, the people of Welland-Thorold put me in or out of this Legislative Assembly.

I tell you, I'm proud to be able to speak on their behalf, and I am indeed pleased with the nature of the debate around Bill 38. It is because we do not have that traditional, rigid caucus discipline that this is as non-partisan and free and candid and frank a debate as it is, and I suspect that people watching are very pleased about that.

Mr Ramsay: I'm pleased to follow the member for Welland-Thorold, because I also am extremely pleased that we have a debate, one of the first debates I can remember in a long time, that has really been non-partisan. We have experienced speeches now from all three political parties represented in the House with varying opinions from each of those parties. I think that's how you're going to see the vote, when it happens, be expressed also, as I believe all three party

leaders have allowed their caucuses a free vote. I'm a big believer in free votes and I wish that would occur more often.

I must say that I will be supporting this bill. I respect very much the views of the previous speaker on this particular bill and issue. I don't agree with him at all on it, but I certainly respect his views, that he is speaking for his constituency. That's very important. I think if the parliamentary tradition is to thrive and to flourish, we need more debates such as this. The hour is late, but I think it is worth it.

I find it hard personally to become as passionate as the previous speaker on this particular issue, because for me it's a non-issue. It's really non-consequential, as far as I'm concerned, in the real scheme of things. I believe that my job here as a legislator at Queen's Park should be, especially now with the type of economy we have, dealing with issues of much more consequence, issues that I think are much more important to my constituents.

My constituents are having trouble finding work to keep their families together. The issue is not that they have an opportunity to go shopping. Many of the families I represent don't even have enough money to go shopping, the luxury to do that on Sunday. That's really not an issue for them. But I think the principle behind the issue is important. It's worth reflecting upon and speaking about, even though the hour is late.

2240

When I hear some of the speakers tonight speaking on this subject, it sounds to me like they are harking back to days that maybe would reflect more 1893 rather than 1993. I guess those were good old days because they were very simple. First of all, most of us who lived in this place at that time were Christian, so we went to a place of worship, and most of us did that on Sundays in 1893. Whether you think that's a good or bad thing, that's not what the majority does today. We can have a debate on that, whether that's good or not. We're a very different society than we were in 1893, and I guess it made sense to preserve those days and for civil law to uphold what we considered to be God's law at that time, that Sunday should be, as it says in the Bible, the day of rest.

I guess it is safe to say that we have moved on from that. Whether for good or bad, that's what society is. Even this government, which campaigned against Sunday shopping, found, when it got into office, that really the majority of the people in Ontario felt otherwise. I must say I applaud the government for changing its mind, for going with the will of the people, because what is the use of putting forward a law that is unenforceable? Histories of governments have found that it is impossible to bring forward laws that are unenforceable, and the Prohibition era is one example of that. In government, we find that basically our populations are

usually much more ahead of us than we are as legislators. I think the Sunday shopping issue is that.

Many of my rural colleagues from all parties are actually wondering why I'm going to vote for this bill. They think that somebody coming from a rural part of the province should be voting against this bill. I must say, when I drive by Timiskaming Square in New Liskeard I find the parking lot is very near full; obviously, there are some people in my riding who care for shopping on Sunday.

Quite frankly, I resent people standing up in their place and saying this bill is an attack on the family. It's not an attack on the family. All it is is permissive legislation. What it does is allow people the freedom to choose, as some of the speakers have very eloquently articulated before me, whether they want to go to shop or not.

It allows, because we are not changing the Labour Relations Act, people to work on Sunday or not, if they choose to. We know many people who want to work on Sundays and many who don't. In the type of economy we have today, with the number of people who are employable and want to seek work, there's lots of opportunity to either, if it's your choice, refuse to work on Sunday or work if you want to or have the necessity to work on Sunday. That opportunity is there.

It's not really an attack on families at all. In fact, I haven't seen, in the year that we've had wide-open Sunday shopping, that the world has changed. Ontario really hasn't changed. Families who go to church are still going to church, and if they maybe went to lunch afterwards they are still doing that. They're still going to church or family picnics in the afternoon. Those who wish to go shopping are doing that or going to a movie. Life really hasn't changed very much in Ontario.

It has maybe changed for some people and I do have some of those concerns. I'm very sympathetic to those people who have invested very heavily in corner store operations, the convenience stores that, by law before, were the only stores that were open. They invested much in their infrastructure to provide the convenience for those of us who wish to procure items on a 24-hour basis, seven days a week. Those people are hurting and I would encourage the government to go a step further. I think the Quebec government solved this problem in balancing the rights and the privileges of small entrepreneurs and the big stores in Quebec by allowing the small corner stores to sell beer and wine. When I look at the society across our border, the province of Quebec, I don't see that that society has changed in any great degree. It's not that much different from Ontario, only that it is a more liberal society and a freer society. The government there tends to treat its population more like adults. Rather, we in Ontario have treated our population like children in the past.

The history of the Ontario government has been one

of paternalism. I think now is a chance to start to show that we should be able to treat our constituents as adults, as equals, and stop coming to this place thinking we know what's best for our constituents. It's time that we be more permissive to the people we represent. I think it's time we start making a stand on that and speaking up for that and stop being afraid of particular groups in society that feel everybody should be adhering to their particular scheme of things, the way they see the world.

We've got to open up Ontario to the world, as we have in our immigration policy. We've told the people of the world basically, "You're all welcome; come to Ontario," that we've got a pluralistic, cosmopolitan society, but yet we have in some regards very old-fashioned, puritanical rules that really represent another era, another day of Ontario life, maybe the day, as I said, of 1893 and not of 1993.

I think it's time we sort of opened up the light into Ontario rule books and the law books and the legislation that we have passed over the years here. Let's open it up and allow people to be free. I would say to the government that we should allow people to be more free than even what we're doing here today in Bill 38. That is just a small opening of freedom for people in this society. We should be moving beyond that, and I would encourage the government to do that.

There have been many comments and some people in the House today have wanted to make this a partisan debate and, yes, in the Liberal government we did have great difficulties with this bill. It was a very tough issue, and I'd like to talk a little bit about that and why we came in at that time with the municipal option.

I'd like to also say to the members why today I can stand in my place and say I am willing to support the government in moving beyond the position of municipal option that I had supported previously. I'm not criticizing the government for changing its mind today; I think the politicians have to be free to be evolving in their thought processes and changing their minds.

I think what we were trying to do, about six years ago now, with the municipal option was to move from being paternalistic as a central Ontario government and start to empower municipalities, rather than holding all the power in the central government. That's what we were trying to do. We said that Ontario is a very vast and different and diverse province. There are very different demands and needs in the various communities across Ontario, so what was maybe good for Fort Frances in northwestern Ontario or Kirkland Lake in my municipality was maybe very different for a downtown riding of Fort York in Toronto or Niagara Falls or the city of Windsor.

I think that, for the time of day, was probably the right thing to do, that the municipalities, while maybe not all liking that responsibility, understood what we

were trying to do, that Ontario was a very different place, that it wasn't the homogenous society that we were in 1893 and that this was the best we could do at that time.

I think today what the government is trying to do, and what I'm supporting and proposed earlier in our Liberal leadership race of a few years ago, is that now it is time to start to empower people as individuals, that we should empower people to be able to make their own choice, not even allow their municipal leaders to make that choice for them but basically empower people to make the decisions whether they want to shop or not on a Sunday, whether they want to open their stores or not on a Sunday or whether they wanted to work or not on a Sunday.

I know that on the cross-border shopping issue, the devaluation of the Canadian dollar in comparison to where it stood a couple of years ago is maybe a big factor of why there's not as much cross-border shopping as there once was. The fact that there's that greater sense of freedom in Ontario, that now in Ontario we can shop at our own stores, I think is part of that. I think it's part of why there's been some reduction in cross-border shopping, that people now have the freedom to go shopping in Ontario on Sundays.

What's very interesting about that is that when we do go shopping, as we know—and my dear mother will know in Oakville if she's watching tonight—shopping's a bit of a recreational activity for many of us. Many times we go shopping and we don't actually make purchases, but we go as a time to be with friends and be with family, to go and look at what's new in the stores and to inform ourselves, as consumers, of what's new.

Many times we don't actually buy, make purchases, but we enjoy the activity, we enjoy the outing. It's nice to get out of our homes, especially in our long winters, especially in northern Ontario, and go to our enclosed malls, and it's become kind of a social activity. It's not just sort of straight commercialism but kind of a social gathering for people. The shopping centres today are kind of our town squares of the day of before and they're sort of gathering places, especially in our climatic conditions.

2250

We sort of enjoy that activity and do some of that on Sundays, and I think just having that freedom in the last year, I really haven't noticed that the province of Ontario has changed all that much. I think, if anything, in one very small incremental way, the people of Ontario have had a greater sense of freedom in their lives.

Before I close, I'd like to certainly encourage the government to maybe go further if it can to give greater freedom to individuals. This may clash with some of that basic philosophy of a left-wing government, the collective versus individual liberty, but I think this is an

issue of individual liberty and I applaud the government for embracing that. I know many in the government party have difficulty with that, as many in our caucus will have difficulty with that, I find, who will vote against the government, and I suppose that to be the same with the third party.

It's going to be an open debate, as it is tonight, and it's going to be an open vote. What's going to be very interesting about that is we don't know where the vote's going to go. Usually we can predict when caucuses are whipped, and our whip right here from Mississauga West is beside us.

We certainly know, with a majority government, where the votes will go. I guess in this one we don't know. I'm just telling you that I will vote with the government on this bill when it comes up. I support this, but it will be interesting to see what does happen, and whether it's a vote of confidence or not, I don't know.

I guess the previous speaker was asked that question by the member for Carleton this evening, and I guess an interesting question it is. It may not be viewed as a vote of confidence, but it's not for me to judge. One of the table officers is calling now, either for pizza or for that opinion I'm not sure, but he's certainly calling out for some sort of assistance. I don't know. I like the Hawaiian myself and I hope that's what's coming in, but it is late of the hour and we can even shop by phone, and I think that's a good thing.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity for this debate. I think it's—

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): It's 967-1111.

Mr Ramsay: That's how we prove we're Canadian citizens, when the Treasurer's quoting one of the famous phone numbers in Toronto for ordering takeout food in this city.

I think it's been a very good debate. I'm pleased that all the members who are participating have done that, really, one of the first times I can remember, in a non-partisan way. I think that's excellent. We're going to have people from all sides voting in different ways on this issue.

Hon Mr Laughren: It's kind of scary.

Mr Ramsay: It's kind of scary, the Treasurer says, but I wish we sort of had more of that because that's what is, I guess, the essence of a true democracy, and maybe this could be the start of better things to come.

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): This is an issue that we've dealt with for some time at the municipal level as well as having dealt with it here at the provincial level, because of course the decisions that are made here affect very directly the many communities in Ontario. That's where a lot of the complaints come up and a lot of the problems are identified, so we certainly

hear about it.

I must say that the situation is very different for different communities. I know that there are people in all caucuses here today who will be supporting this bill and people who will be opposing it, and a lot of that, I think, reflects the different nature of the communities we represent.

In Metropolitan Toronto, for example, in the area I represent, the makeup of the community has changed considerably over the last number of years. There are people from many different countries who have chosen the Metropolitan Toronto area, the riding of Don Mills, to make their home, and with people coming from many different countries, many different cultures, there's obviously a difference of opinion and different expectations with regard to an issue like this.

There is one school, for example, in East York that had children from over 90 different backgrounds, over 90 different countries, and you can well imagine that in a United Nations type of environment such as that, there would be many cultures and many different approaches to life.

It's been interesting that through the debates we've had in the past when people were talking about this issue, one of the points that has come up—and I must say up front that I will be supporting that this bill carry along, so I'll be supporting the second reading of the bill. There may be a few amendments that I'll take a close look at. I assume the bill's going to committee and there could well be amendments at the committee. There may be a few of those that I'll have a close look at, but I'll be supporting it at this point.

Throughout the discussions, I suppose the kinds of reasons that have come up in terms of looking at the bill and supporting the bill—we talk about a pause day. The member for Welland-Thorold has raised this as a central part of his discussion, that there should be a pause day and that a pause day is important. I suppose I wouldn't take too much issue with him: To many people the concept of a pause day is a very important one.

During the discussions we've had, it's been raised time and time again that there are so many people in our society, in our communities, who work on this pause day already that perhaps this isn't as significant an issue as it was a number of years ago: the nurses, the doctors, the police, the fire, the ambulance; people involved in the transportation system, bus drivers and people working on trains and in the airport, gas stations. There are just so many different sectors: the entertainment sector, sports, people at the SkyDome, theatres, out at the zoo, the Canadian National Exhibition, and on and on it goes.

I don't have the statistics, but it would be interesting to look at the proportion of the people in our society

today—plus the politicians—who do work on a Sunday already.

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): Fifty percent of industry.

Mr David Johnson: Fifty percent of industry, I'm told. That's not necessarily from a totally reliable source, but I assume the honourable member has given me the straight information. That's one situation that has certainly come up and been brought to my attention.

In the original instance, if you were to go back many, many years ago, I think two centuries, the control of shopping on Sunday basically emanated from religious observance. But in 1975, it switched as an act to regulate holiday closings for retail business. In that particular act it switched to a pause day, but perhaps now, in this day and age, again we're looking at another change, and we're looking at the real possibility in our society today that we shouldn't have that kind of control and people should have choice and businesses should be allowed to be open.

One of the key factors that has always come up during this debate as well concerns economic issues. When you look at the economics of the issue, first and foremost, in this area and I suspect in Welland and Thorold as well—look at the tourist trade in Metropolitan Toronto. I can tell you that over the years the Metro Toronto Convention and Visitors Association has strongly supported the concept of Sunday shopping because the association recognizes that conventions coming in, delegates coming in, add a great deal to the economy of Metropolitan Toronto. They spend money on many different activities: shopping, dining, transportation and many different activities. We need to be in a competitive position to attract conventions and visitors. They create jobs, they create wealth, they're important to the economic wellbeing of our society.

I must admit that some of my statistics may be a little out of date, but in 1989 there were 17 million visitors to Metropolitan Toronto through conventions and visitors coming into Metropolitan Toronto; 17 million people, which is about seven or eight times the population of Metropolitan Toronto. These people coming to Metropolitan Toronto spent \$2.5 billion in the economy: \$2.5 billion on accommodation, shopping, dining, all of those kinds of activities. The economic impact on Metropolitan Toronto, counting the ripple effect, was about \$3.5 billion.

When we debate the budget that the Treasurer has brought in, we're concerned about the economic impact, we're concerned about the loss of jobs and we're concerned about the impact of higher taxation on the business community. Here is an activity—people coming in, conventions and visitors coming to Metropolitan Toronto—that is working the other way around: creating wealth, creating jobs and getting the economy going. The question is, what do we do to support this

kind of activity?

2300

Frankly, one of the answers is Sunday shopping. What I'm told is that many of the conventions that come in, conventions such as the Shriners or Kiwanis or many other groups, start on Sunday. Sunday is the first day, and they carry from Sunday through Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. That is a common kind of convention within Metropolitan Toronto. Sunday is the first day they come, they have time on their hands and they are ready to buy, they are ready to shop, they are ready to patronize the stores that are nearby. If the stores are closed, that is a lost opportunity, but if the stores are open, there's an opportunity to buy and there's an opportunity to spend money. That money creates jobs and opportunities within our community.

I might say that shopping accounts for about 20% of visitor spending, which in the case of Metropolitan Toronto is over half a billion dollars a year in the retail stores. A great deal of this shopping would be done on a Sunday if the stores are permitted to be open.

There have been a number of studies done. One was accomplished by Goldfarb Consultants. They interviewed people in Boston, Detroit, London, Ontario; they interviewed people in 14 other cities in the United States and Ontario. They asked what the important things were in terms of visiting, what sorts of things would be important to you if you were to visit. The number one activity that came out was shopping. So if we're going to expect to attract visitors to Metropolitan Toronto and our other communities, then we're going to need to promote things like Sunday shopping.

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): Imperial Oil likes you, you know.

Mr David Johnson: Well, since I'm being heckled from the other side, I'm going to speak to some of the pieces of legislation that have been brought in in the past. Let me comment on the legislation that came in under the Liberals, to start with. This was a suggestion that would have delegated the authority on Sunday shopping to the municipalities. The municipalities would have been given the responsibility. This was a piece of art, this was. It would have allowed, for example, the region of York or the region of Peel to have Sunday shopping but not necessarily Metropolitan Toronto.

It sounded very democratic, but it was the old domino effect, and it would have been a complete disaster had it been implemented. What would have happened was that one municipality would have implemented it and then the merchants located in the next municipality would have been put in a dreadful disadvantage with regard to competition, and there would have been no choice but to implement it in the next municipality. So it would have swept across this province, but it would have done so in a way that would have been very harmful to the business community and

it would have created a great deal of conflict.

Thank heavens that isn't the kind of piece of legislation that we have at present. However, the first effort by the NDP, I must say, wasn't much better. The first effort by the NDP, the government in power today, was an act that again essentially would have left the responsibility to the municipalities, but under a number of conditions.

First of all, you would have to define a geographic area and within a geographic area you could have Sunday shopping. But there's a set of five criteria that would have had to have been met to define a geographic area as eligible for Sunday shopping. The area would have to have historical or natural attractions, or it would have to have cultural or ethnic attractions, or it would have to have a concentration of hospitality services, or it would have to have access to hiking, boating and camping, or it would have to have fairs, festivals and other special attractions, and somebody would have to sort through all that and the geographic area would have to satisfy two of those conditions.

For larger stores of over 7,500 square feet, that wasn't the end of the story. They would further have to satisfy another set of criteria before those stores could be open on Sunday. One of the provisions was that they could provide goods or services necessary to tourist activities in an area served by the establishment. Again, there was a definition of tourism. Tourism involved people who would come to that particular area from over 40 kilometres.

So this was a tremendously complicated piece of legislation and it baffled the municipalities as to how anyone could sort through this and determine what was a geographic area that would be eligible for Sunday shopping and, secondly, what sort of businesses within that geographic area would be eligible to be open on Sunday. Thank heavens that didn't go ahead.

Now in Metropolitan Toronto we decided that, in the event that it did go ahead, we had to have some mechanism in place, but no municipal bureaucracy could sort through this, so the approach that we were essentially forced to use was to hire consultants to consider all the applications, to consider what would be a geographic area, to consider what businesses would be eligible, at a considerable cost. We had to look at a fee of perhaps \$1,500 to \$2,000 for each application to sort through this mess. It collapsed. It was just unmanageable.

That then brings us up to the present situation, I guess, in the sense that the government's first approach was just a complete disaster. It couldn't be implemented; it couldn't be managed; it involved public deputations; it was just a complete disaster. At least, thank heavens, the government took a step back and it said, "We can't go ahead with this," and announced in June 1992 that it would be bringing forward legislation to permit Sunday shopping.

I think the approach is one that frankly had to be taken because no matter what side of this issue you're on, the approaches up to this point have been unmanageable. The Liberal approach wouldn't have worked and the previous NDP legislation was unmanageable. I think we're down to a situation now where we either support Sunday shopping or we oppose Sunday shopping. There's nothing in between.

Mr Mahoney: It's only taken us five years.

2310

Mr David Johnson: Five years, yes. It's taken five years, but we sorted through it. It's either we do it or we don't.

I must say that the vast majority of the people of southern Ontario support the concept of Sunday shopping. Any poll that's taken, including a poll in the Niagara region, will show that three quarters of the people are in support of Sunday shopping. It'll show that large proportions of people in fact have shopped on Sunday and it'll show that large proportions of people, by far the vast majority, perhaps 80%, do not consider Sunday shopping to be detrimental to family life, for example, or detrimental to their communities. I think the time has come that we should carry through and look at this Sunday shopping bill, perhaps clean it up a little bit, but go ahead with it.

I might say that another reason that has been cited in the past concerns cross-border shopping, and this is an issue. For example, in the Niagara region, this is a major concern that many people were shopping on Sunday and still are shopping on Sunday but they're going across to the United States, and that money is being lost. In the border communities in Ontario, according to a study in 1991, the border communities were losing about \$350 million in sales to cross-border shopping.

We can talk about corner stores. I have a lot of sympathy for corner stores and I think we should listen to what the people in the corner stores are saying. I understand from a speech before that many of these proprietors are losing money because Sunday shopping isn't being enforced at this point.

At the same time, I think we have to recognize that a great number of people are going to shop on a Sunday, and if they don't have the opportunity to shop here in Ontario, then they're going to go south to the United States. This money is going to go out of Ontario and out of Canada, and we're losing the benefits of that.

The same study estimates that in the whole province of Ontario, there has been about a billion dollars a year lost to cross-border shopping, in the border communities themselves about \$350 million. But if you count the whole province of Ontario about a billion dollars a year is lost through cross-border shopping and about \$50 million in taxes that the Treasurer may be interested in.

This is quite a loss to our community and this is something that I think should weigh in terms of the decision on this matter.

For these reasons, I'm going to be supporting the bill, but I think it's a real shame that this bill was introduced almost one year ago today and it hasn't been pursued. This bill should have been in place years ago, at best. At least, since this bill has been introduced a year ago, I think it is wrong that the situation has taken us this long to deal with. It's wrong that businesses are put in a situation that, in effect, the law is such that they're not supposed to be open on Sunday, although they've been told that the law isn't going to be enforced. That's a temporary measure that I think we can understand in some cases, but to have the situation carry on for over a year now and with the likelihood of it carrying on for several more months, I think is simply unacceptable.

Frankly, it's a blotch on the record of this government that that has happened, but at any rate, the matter is before us now and needs to be dealt with. I'm going to support it. Those conclude my comments for this evening.

Mr McLean: I welcome the opportunity to comment briefly on the remarks made by the member for Don Mills. I want to say that what we have seen here in this Legislature with regard to the controversy that's gone on with this bill is that from the large metropolitan areas, they agree with the legislation, and from a lot of the small ridings, they don't agree with the legislation.

I want to bring to your attention, Mr Speaker, that the previous speaker from the NDP—I got a phone call while I was in my office just a few minutes ago that indicated the speaker he was speaking into had been muffed. His speech did not come through very well and they figure somebody was tampering with his speaker. Well, I can understand that because they brought in new rules for this Legislature so that the very same member would have only a half an hour to speak. I can understand why they have muffed his speaker, in order that he could only speak for half an hour. I would hope that you would check that, Mr Speaker.

I want to say that southern Ontario wants Sunday shopping, as the member has just said. Probably around the Golden Horseshoe there's about six million people who want Sunday shopping and the majority would say that. But perhaps in the rest of the province of Ontario, the majority may say they don't want it. What do you do in that case?

In this Legislature, we have had a great debate with regard to Sunday shopping, but there was a budget brought in not very long ago, and do you know something? There has been no debate allowed on that budget. I cannot believe, with the amount of years I've been here and the amount of days we used to spend dealing with the budget, that it has been cancelled. I cannot

understand that.

I cannot understand why the Solicitor General of this province is allowing this bill to sit as long as it has without debate, without input from the public, in order to let the people go on and break the law until this new one has been completed.

Mr Kormos: That was certainly news to me that somehow the microphone wasn't working properly. Perhaps, Speaker, you could inquire into that and perhaps tomorrow afternoon, if indeed the sound transmission was ineffective, I could have my 30 minutes over again. I would be pleased to repeat what I said earlier this evening.

Interesting comments by the new member for Don Mills, because he has, with all due respect, tended to confuse some of the issues here. We're talking about the Retail Business Holidays Act. We're not talking about upsetting what has traditionally been accessible to tourists, for instance, under the pre-existing Retail Business Holidays Act. We're not talking, of course, about police officers and hospital workers. The fact is that it's very difficult to determine when a traumatic injury is going to happen. It's not so difficult to determine when you're going to go buy your fridge or your chesterfield. Indeed, it happens seven days a week that the police are called upon for assistance, but it isn't seven days a week that you have to go down to the hardware store to purchase some machine bolts. So there's a real distinction to be made there.

The fact is that even under the old Retail Business Holidays Act, before all this horrible mucking around happened with the last government with the legislation, there was wide access in tourist areas to the very sorts of retail and quasi-retail stores that tourists tended to purchase items in.

I don't know about Don Mills, but down in Welland, tourists don't buy fridges. Okay? Tourists don't tend to buy suits, and if they are inclined, they can wait till Monday, just like everybody else. Indeed, what a wonderful reason for them to stay overnight in one of the many fine hotels in the Welland-Thorold area.

I'm a little bit concerned that there is this obfuscation of the real issues here. Let's stick to the precise issue, and I'd be more than pleased to hear your response to that, sir.

2320

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Don Mills, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr David Johnson: I guess, speaking as I've been directed by the member for Welland-Thorold, I certainly appreciate his comments. I actually was in his riding, as he may know, a couple of weeks ago, speaking to some of the faithful in his riding, and I know that he's very well respected in that area. But I must say that in terms of talking to the people I talked to in the Welland-

Thorold area, I'm hearing a slightly different story from them than I'm hearing from the member tonight.

I mentioned that polls were taken in southern Ontario in a number of regions and I can say that in the Niagara region, 75% of the people were in support of Sunday shopping in the poll that was taken. That still leaves 25% that were opposed, but my recollection is that the member received more than that in the last election, I think; I imagine he did. But 75% of the people are in support, so I think he might be aware of that fact.

The other situation is that yes, he might think that people don't buy fridges or suits on a Sunday—

Mr Eddy: Tourists.

Mr David Johnson: —or tourists, maybe that's possible, but tourists do shop for many other things, and they do shop for shirts and souvenir shirts and all sorts of things on Sunday. Many of the people who are shopping are going south into the United States. I think the member would find that if Sunday shopping continues, there's going to be a healthy impetus, some money into the economy of Welland-Thorold for the good of his community.

Mr McLean: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I just got the news that in Alberta, the Liberals have 31 seats, the PCs have 52, and the New Democratic Party in Alberta has zero.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you for the information, but it certainly is not a point of order. Any further debate? The member for St Catharines.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I've been awaiting the day when I could discuss in this House the issue of Sunday shopping—its the Retail Business Holidays Act, but Sunday shopping essentially—for some period of time, because it's an issue about which I've felt very strongly for a number of years.

I have sat in this House for some 16 years. I have seen some significant changes in the shopping patterns in the province of Ontario, and I've seen three different political parties endeavour to wrestle with the very difficult problem of when people should be permitted to shop and when they should not be.

I was, earlier this evening, at the retirement of Mr Gord Smith, who was a physical education teacher of mine a number of years ago and a very good friend of mine, but I wanted to make sure I came back tonight, because the House is sitting tonight to debate this particular piece of legislation.

I want to indicate at the beginning of my remarks that I intend to vote against the legislation. It has always been my position. I understand that when people are in cabinet, they must adopt a certain position, that they must support a decision that is held by a government, and that means whether one agrees or disagrees, at the end of the day when there is a discussion in cabinet, if

it's not an overwhelming issue that would compel a resignation, then one tends to acquiesce in the decision of the majority of cabinet, along with the Premier's views on this matter.

I happen to believe that this piece of legislation is not good for the province of Ontario and that it will not be particularly beneficial to this province.

I have read with interest and heard with interest over the years the position which was advocated by the Premier of the province of Ontario, Mr Bob Rae, when he was in opposition. When he was at the conventions of the New Democratic Party, he spoke with some passion against a wide-open Sunday and against compelling people—because that's essentially what happens—to work on various holidays that many people take for granted in this province.

It's partially because of the strong views that were expressed by the Premier, a man for whom I have a good deal of respect, for the intellectual arguments he advanced and the emotion which he included in those arguments over the years. I could quote at some length the Premier of this province. I'm not going to spend a lot of time in this particular speech doing so, but needless to say, the Premier has asked pointed questions to both Conservatives and Liberals who were in power, and I was very much moved by the arguments the Premier has made over the years against a wide-open Sunday.

It's quite obvious to me that what has happened is that the government has read the polls. Anybody who thinks, by the way, in this time of restraint that the Premier and his cabinet are not polling at taxpayers' expense is dreaming in Technicolor. Of course they are, and that is something else that the Premier was adamantly opposed to in opposition.

He had an ethical and moral position against using taxpayers' dollars to poll and then not share the results of those polls with other members of the Legislature. If the New Democratic Party wishes to do it with their funds, that is certainly acceptable, but to use government funds is not acceptable, according to Mr Rae in his time in opposition. Of course he has changed his mind now.

But I suspect what has happened is that the government has done some polling, as the member for York East has suggested. The polls will say that if you ask the question the right way, in other words if you get the big grocery stores to have the pollster ask the question the right way, then you will get an answer that says people want to have the opportunity to shop on Sunday. If you say, however, "Would you like to work on Sunday?" then the results of that polling will be considerably different.

I happen to believe that we should not be governing by polls. They're interesting. One must take into

consideration what the general feelings of the public are on any particular issue, but I think this is an issue where governments can show some leadership. In this case, the Premier has simply acquiesced to the polls and acquiesced because he doesn't feel it's worthwhile fighting this battle. I can understand that. I have seen other premiers who have had similar thoughts, that it simply isn't worth the battle that one has to go through.

I happen to like the fact that we in Ontario have had a common pause day. There are a lot of things I admire about the United States. The United States is a great country. It is an economic giant. It is an entrepreneurial country. It has a lot of assets that one can admire.

One of the things I have not admired about the United States is the overcommercialism which I see in that country. One of the things I have not admired over the years is the fact that one day of the week is the same as the rest of the days, that they haven't essentially had that common pause day, which I think is beneficial, particularly to family units but also to people right across the province. It is something that is different. It is something that is nice to have. It adds to the quality of life and our province to have that common pause day.

We have to look at who has to work if this bill goes through. Essentially, it's women, because women have many of the part-time jobs in the retail sector. It's a fact of life, if you look at the facts and figures, that it is often women, who are a second income, and often people who are working part-time, or at least not the full 40 hours a week, who are compelled to work.

The Minister of Labour can make an argument if he wants to that somehow there is legislation that is going to protect these people from having to work. We all know in this house that the company has a way of persuading people, of coercing people to work on holidays if the company wishes to do so, and if a person wishes to retain a job or gain a job with a commercial outlet, then that person is going to be compelled to work on holidays, including Sundays.

The second group of people who are very concerned, I think, are people who own family businesses. I have discussed this with many of them. They don't really employ too many people outside of the family. They would rather be open six days a week than seven days a week and have at least one day off. If this legislation goes through, there's going to be great pressure for them to keep their stores open.

I understand in the bill there's a provision which says that in large malls people will not be compelled to stay open if the other stores are open. I'll believe that when I see it. Again, there's a lot of pressure which is exerted, indirect pressure, which means that retail outlets that don't want to stay open are essentially going to be compelled to stay open in order to compete with others, in order to comply with the wishes of those who

happen to run that particular mall.

But I want to go back to the people who work. Often part-time workers who are women do not have unions to protect them, and even those who have unions to protect them from unfair work practices—often the union may not be strong enough or may not be able to exert the kind of strength because of the complexity of the issues that face those companies and these people are, in effect, compelled to work on Sunday.

It's nice for people to be able to sit down around the table and look at each other once during the week. It has been said that there is a lack of communication in families. Whether that can be substantiated or not, I don't know. But I would suggest that the passage of this bill, that the continuation in effect, because it's in effect, of wide-open Sundays and wide-open Sunday shopping is diminishing that opportunity, not eliminating but diminishing that opportunity for the family to get together, for friends to get together in an atmosphere other than the usual hustle and bustle that takes place the other six days of the week.

2330

It is argued from time to time that in fact it is an economic benefit. I'm going to tell you something: I have only so much money to spend. I'm going to spend it in either seven days or six days. The amount of the money does not increase, the amount of the money out there is the same, but there are other increased costs in terms of overhead as we have a wide-open Sunday or a wide-open seven days a week or wide-open holidays.

There is an additional cost and that cost can be reflected in one of two things; that is, an increase in the prices of the products that people purchase or a decrease in the quality of the products and services that are provided. You have to save the money somehow.

A couple of people wrote good columns on this. Unfortunately, the material that I have here perhaps refers to 1991. The position seems to change yearly, and that, I must say, is not characteristic of this government alone; other governments have made those changes. But I thought Robert Sheppard wrote a good column on October 24, 1991. It is entitled as follows, "...And They Said Never on Sunday." I'm going to read some excerpts from it because I think it's relevant to this particular debate. He starts off by saying:

"The Ontario government seems to be in the midst of another pirouette. Which, in the long run, may be even more significant than the summer turnaround on public auto insurance...."

"To say that the NDP in Ontario was against Sunday shopping would be to revel in understatement. For years, while in opposition, it had badgered the former Liberal and Conservative governments to end the practice, with a vehemence bordering on the sanctimonious. When the party came to power last year, the desire

to enact a 'common pause day'—to 'strengthen family and community life'—was one of the more prominent aspects of the NDP agenda." That, again, is the Agenda for People that we all used to think really meant something when it was put forward during the last election campaign.

"For Mr Rae, a ban on wide-open Sunday shopping seemed more than just a partisan or ideological act. It was a cornerstone of the 'new ethics' he was hoping to bring to the province, an attempt to turn Ontario into the kind of place that Jimmy Stewart would be proud to live in.

"I don't say this to make fun of Mr Rae, because I think the evidence is there that a common day of rest was part of a very real vision he had for the province. It was a vision of a hardworking yet fair community, withdrawing from mindless consumerism and waste into something from which a host of common values might eventually emerge.

"A ban on Sunday shopping, then, was just one element of a larger design. Now, it seems to have run smack into the great intransigent—political reality."

He talks about the fact that it may have been to jump-start the economy that the Premier thought it might be worthy of changing policy, but Mr Sheppard goes on to say:

"But even considering Sunday shopping to this extent, for the best of political and practical reasons, Mr Rae has bent one of his cardinal rules. And once you bend a principle, it can never be shiny and new again."

He ends his column by saying the following:

"None the less, this issue has had tremendous symbolic and personal importance for Mr Rae and his views on it are worthy of respect. And though he is only choosing one month out of 12 for the stores to stay open—that was back when it was only one month—"all the time, it is the month when the vast majority of sales are made for many products, the month that contains the holiest of Christian holidays. So the new law may end up standing for a long time as a symbol of convenience."

Who would have believed that the NDP would ever be the party that would fall into the trap of governing for convenience?

I thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs for providing a glass of water for me.

Mr White: It's half empty.

Mr Bradley: Or half a glass of water. I'm very pleased to see that he is interested and staying around for this particular debate.

Another interesting individual who I think is worthy of quoting on this issue is Michael Valpy. Now, Michael Valpy could never be accused of being anti-NDP. I've read many of his articles. He has certainly

reflected favourably upon the New Democratic Party, and in some cases justifiably. I happen to agree with Michael Valpy, for instance, on the articles that he has written in favour of the Niagara Escarpment Commission—a commission, by the way, which is now under assault by a pro-development lobby and seems to be not getting the kind of backing that I would have hoped from the government as a whole. No doubt the Minister of Environment and Energy is strongly working to save the Niagara Escarpment, but there must be others in that government who are eager to acquiesce to project X and to allow the escarpment to be eaten away piece by piece.

But that doesn't affect Sunday shopping, and I want to deal with some of what Mr Valpy has had to say. His article, appearing in the *Globe and Mail* on June 6, 1991, says the following:

"The beginning point with Sunday shopping is to ask whether it is in the public interest to have curbs of some sort on commercial activity and whether one of those curbs should be a legislated common pause day. The answer is yes.

"The moral authority in Canadian society entails something more than the unbridled encouragement of consumers to satisfy ever-increasing material demands.

"There is value in the whole machine—or as much of it as practicable—being shut down for a day, freeing our minds for gratifications of other sorts. Family life, exercise, the spiritual balm of loafing and smelling the flowers.

"Ontario's New Democratic Party government, in its legislation introduced this week, could have chosen Monday or Wednesday as the common pause day. It chose Sunday, not because of Christian pulpit pressure but because of its convenience. There is a secular as well as religious traditional bias in Canada toward Sunday; services such as public transit, for example, are geared to a Sunday slowdown.

"Sunday-shopping restrictions are said to encourage cross-border shopping. Canadians shop in the United States because they have decided that goods are cheaper, particularly children's clothing, electronics and dairy products.

"British Columbia has had restrictionless commercial Sundays since 1987, and cross-border shopping since then has increased by 400%, says Clifford Evans, Canadian director of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union.

"Sunday-shopping restrictions are said to be an unwarranted burden on merchants in tough economic times. For that argument to hold water, one would have to examine whether Sunday shopping actually puts a whole lot of new consumer dollars into the system or merely shifts them from some other day.

"The more likely argument is that there is a finite

number of consumer dollars. The needed items of consumption are going to be bought regardless of when the stores are open. What is important in this debate is where—that is, from whom—the goods are going to be bought.

"It perhaps is more realistic to see the argument over Sunday shopping as a price war between the big chains and the boutiques and niche stores.

"The niche stores often offer a better quality and better range of goods than the chains—precisely the kind of innovative pluralism and commercial excellence Canadians might want to encourage.

"But the chains have the economic power to stretch overhead costs across seven days and the small shops do not. And the chains have the sales volume to enable them to charge slightly lower prices and, hence, claw back market share.

"Many of the proprietors of small shops—often women, often working 60- to 70-hour weeks, either alone or with one or two assistants—would be exceptionally hard put to absorb the personal, family and financial strain of staying open for a seventh day, especially with little prospect of much increase in sales.

"As for the food retailing industry, it is difficult to see the major supermarkets' arguments for open shopping as anything more than a campaign to elbow out the neighbourhood delis and convenience stores.

"All that being said, the Ontario government's bill seems to have dissatisfied most interested parties, which does not necessarily suggest that it is the perfect compromise legislation," and he goes on to describe the bill.

"What worries groups such as the United Food and Commercial Workers—85% of whose 70,000 members favour Sunday shopping curbs—is that the criteria are loose enough to drive a truck through."

Well, that's Michael Valpy making I think a rather interesting observation about the prospect of Sunday shopping and particularly the history of the NDP on this issue.

2340

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union, which has certainly incurred the wrath of some members of the government and has received the support of other members of the government who sit in the government benches, including the member for Perth, who has resigned as a result of her argument with the government and resigned from the cabinet as a result of her lack of agreement with the government on the social contract legislation, put out a piece of paper, a group of arguments which I think are rather compelling about this issue. They asked some questions about Sunday shopping and they say the following:

"Does Sunday shopping boost the economy? Another way to put this question would be, 'How does spending a fixed amount over six days differ from spending that

same amount over seven days?'

"One could argue that opening a store seven days a week results in higher overhead with no increase in total sales. This higher overhead is passed on to the consumer as higher prices, thereby adding to cost-push inflationary pressures. Inflation reduces real purchasing power.

"There is no economic data supporting the case for Sunday shopping boosting the general economy."

So they go on to ask the next question. This is well done; this is well set out.

"Are jobs lost without Sunday shopping?"

They conclude the following:

"There is also no data which shows that Sunday shopping creates jobs for the economy.

"The A&P chain lost 202 jobs in the six months after June 1990, when there was wide-open Sunday shopping. Similarly, Loblaws reduced staff hours by 3.14%.

"The increased overhead associated with Sunday shopping forces employers to choose between raising prices and reducing labour costs."

Next question they ask and answer:

"Will tourists stay away?"

"Tourists come to Ontario for many reasons, but they do not come here to purchase groceries. They travel to attractions, parks and tourist spots where they purchase other items or services.

"What most affects tourism is the monetary exchange rate. The federal government's high-dollar policy has been adversely affecting purchases by foreign tourists.

"There is no shortage of tourist-designated areas for foreign travellers to purchase goods and services on any Sunday in Ontario."

Next question:

"Will cross-border shopping increase?"

"There is considerable evidence that misdirected federal government policies—the free trade agreement, the GST, and high exchange rates—are driving hard-pressed Canadians to shop in the US.

"Until these policies are reversed, there is little the government of Ontario can do to solve this particular problem," according to OPSEU. "In provinces with wide-open Sunday shopping, cross-border shopping has actually increased.

"What are the social costs of Sunday shopping?" they ask, and then provide a response.

The response is this:

"There are also social costs associated with wide-open Sunday shopping. Police forces will have to be increased to handle the increase of shoplifting and other related crimes. Public transportation will have to be increased to handle the flow of Sunday traffic. Day care facilities will have to operate an extra day.

"Municipal taxes will have to increase to meet these additional burdens. Property taxes are a regressive form of taxation, which can only result in lower consumption by over-taxed home owners."

Then they talk about family life and leisure.

"The issue of a common pause day must not be confused with the issue of cross-border shopping.

"A common pause day must be linked to the issue of how work relates to family life and leisure.

"For most young families, both parents, including mothers of young children, are expected to work for pay. Both parents are equally responsible for the economic support of their children. Most important, both parents are responsible for providing for an emotionally secure support system for their children. A key element in this support system is when the family shares a common day of leisure.

"Since governments now encourage both parents to work, it is both proper and necessary that governments make it as easy as possible for them to do so.

"Governments must likewise focus policy on making it as easy as possible for workers and families to enjoy leisure time together. In a civilized society, governments promote and foster more voluntary leisure time.

"Free choice and flexibility: improving our quality of life," they go on, and they say:

"Governments and service industry employers should make it a policy goal to provide the individual with the greatest possible degree of freedom to allocate his or her own time among different uses, be it work or leisure.

"By having freely determined options, rather than being forced by employer pressures, workers will have the power to choose how time is allocated. This empowering process goes a long way towards reducing work stress and improving the quality of life.

"Bill 115," which they are referring to in this, "will assist workers gain some power over their work and leisure time. We commend it."

In other words, they were looking for some restrictions on the kind of wide-open Sundays that we had before. It concludes the following:

"The labour movement has long argued for a common pause day for all workers and their families.

"OPSEU agrees with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union when they conclude that Bill 115, 'while representing a move in the right direction, would fail to ensure that this goal is met and would serve to open the door to a further erosion of the common pause day.'

"We respectfully ask that this committee recommend the proposed amendments of the United Food and Commercial Workers."

This is a submission by OPSEU. I'll be interested to

see, when this bill passes, what they're going to say in Local 199 CAW News. I haven't seen this issue canvassed as it might be, and I know my good friends who are responsible for writing the columns will want to comment on this piece of legislation and how it relates to the long-standing commitment of the New Democratic Party government in Ontario to workers in this province, these being the most vulnerable of workers.

Those of us who are elected to public office are not here to protect the rich and the privileged. The rich and the privileged can protect themselves. They have lots of money; they have lots of resources. The privileged have access to those in power, whether it be in the elected offices or the civil service. They are often able to look after their own interests.

The people we are elected to represent are the people who cannot easily represent themselves. At least that's why I came to this Legislature, not to represent Conrad Black, who has a lot of money and a lot of influence and has made, in many ways, some positive contributions to this province and to this country. Conrad Black does not need me in this Legislature.

As I say, it's often the woman who is forced to work part-time or, in the case of some men, the men who are forced to work part-time in this province because somebody thinks we should have a wide-open Sunday and wide-open holidays. Those are the people we are elected to represent and to protect. That is why I'm in this Legislature and that is one of the reasons I'm voting strongly against this bill.

I have made this argument with my colleagues in the Liberal caucus. They will vote whatever way they see fit—it is a free vote—just as everybody outside of the cabinet, on the other side, will be voting the way they see fit. I understand why the cabinet votes as a bloc, and I'm not being critical of the government or the Premier for that particular reason.

But I do appeal to members of this House to give this very serious consideration. I know one of the arguments is that we already have wide-open Sunday shopping, that in fact Bob Rae and his government, the members of the cabinet, have decided to just let things go and, eventually, when you have it six months or nine months, people will accept it and then you'll be intruding upon them to take away that privilege or at least that opportunity to shop till they drop on Sunday or other retail holidays.

But we are elected as well to give some leadership. It has fallen upon probably two particular groups to indicate opposition: One is composed of members of the churches, who have strongly petitioned against this and who continue to be, by and large, opposed to wide-open Sundays. They're not talking about corner convenience stores, they're not talking about the exemptions that are there for the purposes of tourism; they're talking about a wide-open Sunday where you have people dragged

into grocery stores and dragged into large stores and forced to work. I use that word "forced" knowing full well that the well-meaning legislation of the Minister of Labour to protect them is simply not going to protect them.

I look at the New Democratic Party as a party which has been a party of principles in years gone by. I haven't always agreed with some of the positions that members have come forward with as a result of their provincial council. The provincial council meets or the party as a whole meets and debates resolutions. I always used to think that when the NDP at an annual convention put forward a policy, in fact the party was obligated to implement it, unlike the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party where it is a guide but it is not mandatory for either the Conservatives or the Liberals, when in power, to implement those policies. That's one way I thought the NDP was different. It was something I think a lot of people admired about the NDP, how it was going to be different in this particular area. If they were to reflect the provincial council, if they were to reflect the policies which have come forward at various conventions, then the NDP government would probably be, as a whole, voting against this legislation.

In the Niagara Peninsula—I can't speak for my colleagues—I think four of the six members at least have indicated their opposition to this particular bill. I respect the point of view that is put forward by those who don't agree with me. The four of us, by the way, were chastised in a local letter to the editor by a well-known New Democrat the other day, who perhaps has forgotten what the NDP policy was on this or perhaps disagreed with it before, but I hadn't seen in the paper before that he had disagreed with it.

2350

There are going to be people who are going to disagree with this. I'm sure there are many of my constituents who would not necessarily be giving me a standing ovation over taking this principled position. But I do think when you enter politics you are supposed to have certain principles that you adhere to. People elect you knowing what you stand for and I think they expect that you are going to try to put those principles and those policies into practice. It isn't always possible. I know that. I know the realities of government dictate that governments can't always fulfil all of the promises they want to fulfil, promises they didn't simply make to get elected but really wanted to implement in the best of all worlds.

But this is one piece of legislation where it seems to me that doesn't apply. If the government truly believes that, the Premier of this province, who in his years in opposition was a most principled individual, who articulated the opposition to retail wide-open Sundays and wide-open holidays extremely well in years gone by, should stand in this House and say: "I'm going to

agree with the policy that I stood for all these years. I'm going to withdraw this particular bill and I'm going to attempt to put forward a proposal that would not make Ontario wide open on Sundays and wide open on other holidays."

To those in the churches who have made a compelling case, to those in the trade union movement who have made a compelling case, to those who simply want to preserve some vestige of family life and some vestige of the difference between Ontario and Canada and the United States, I implore those individuals to vote against this legislation as I will.

Mr McLean: I just want to comment briefly for two minutes on the comments the member for St Catharines made. It shows us the controversy in this province with regard to this very piece of legislation. The question I want to ask the government, and we see that there are many members here who oppose this legislation, is, what if this legislation doesn't pass? What are you going to do then? Are you going to immediately go out and charge all the people who have been opening the businesses they operate?

I have presented many petitions in this Legislature opposing Sunday shopping. I presented them from the churches in Orillia, from the churches in Elmvale and Penetanguishene. I have spoken in this Legislature with regard to those petitions I have presented. I tell you, there is a great concern raised by many people with regard to this legislation. I'm going to be interested in listening to what the minister has to say, whether he is going to refer this bill to committee so that there can be further input with regard to the legislation.

We have had a debate here for two or three days on this legislation and we have not had one day on the very important budget that was presented not long ago. This is probably the last chance I'm going to have to say anything about Bill 38, the act to amend Sunday shopping in the province of Ontario. The concern that has been raised by the members who have spoken here this evening is the concern that is raised in the province of Ontario by many people in my community and right across the province. It's an issue that I'll be pleased to vote on the day they bring it here for the final vote. I will stand up and be counted.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Brant-Haldimand, you have two minutes.

Mr Eddy: I rise to advise that I will be voting against the bill and for many reasons. We talk about the economics of the situation. Figures tell different stories. I've been advised by people who have commercial establishments that they're being forced to be open on Sunday because others are, but it will cost them money to be open on Sundays through the amount of sales that they're going to have.

I want to comment on the other matter of the Exhbi-

tion, the SkyDome, shift workers and all that sort of thing. Many people do have to work on some Sundays, but they do not have to work them all. I just wanted to add that I think the most ridiculous thing that I experienced was on Boxing Day, the day invented for shopping. What happened? The police were out looking to see who was open, who was contravening a legal holiday. You can't shop on Boxing Day. Sundays: Let's keep the sanity and sanctity of the Lord's Day.

Mr Perruzza: I'd just like to take two seconds to respond very briefly to my colleague. I admire his opposition to this particular bill, but just simply say that what we've seen here tonight with the debate and the open vote, it just reinforces my belief in this parliamentary institution of ours. That should be applauded because we've seen fine speeches on all sides of the House.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for St Catharines, you have two minutes.

Mr Bradley: I want to give the minister an opportunity to wrap up, so I'll forgo my two minutes.

Hon David Christopherson (Solicitor General): I thank the member for allowing me the opportunity to wrap up this evening.

I've listened with great interest to the views expressed by members during this debate. It's clear that there will never be unanimity, either in the public or in this House. However, it's equally clear that the majority of people in Ontario want Sunday shopping and are increasingly impatient of rules and regulations preventing them from doing so.

The majority of people in Ontario want the right to shop on Sunday. The majority of retail businesses want the right to choose whether or not they wish to open for business on Sunday. These are the critical factors that have led us to the kind of legislation we have in front of us today.

First, this government has listened to the people. We have monitored the change in public attitude and responded to the public's need by crafting the most equitable resolution to the issue.

Secondly, this decision is assisting Ontario's economic renewal. Certainly the government recognizes that by itself Sunday shopping is not a solution to economic problems. However, this government's decision is helping to stimulate business for local retailers.

Thirdly, there are substantial protections in the Employment Standards Act for retail workers who choose not to work on Sundays.

As you know, this government has always maintained its commitment to protect the rights of retail employees who work on Sunday. Two years ago we improved the Employment Standards Act to give retail workers the absolute right to refuse work on Sundays and holidays and to 36 hours of weekly rest. The Minister of Labour has programs in effect to enforce these provisions.

We are confident that this amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act meets the needs of consumers, the needs of business and, together with the Employment Standards Act, meets the needs of retail workers in Ontario.

A government that listens to the people, a government that is mature and responsive is a government that recognizes that times change and we must change with them. Bill 38 reflects the wishes of the majority of residents in this province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Christopherson has moved the second reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; this will be a 30-minute bell.

"Pursuant to standing order 28(g), I request that the vote on second reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping, moved by the Honourable David Christopherson, be deferred until immediately following routine proceedings, Wednesday, June 16, 1993."

The vote will now be deferred.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Shelley Martel (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): Mr Speaker, if I might advise the House of the business schedule for tomorrow, Wednesday, June 16: We will be dealing with committee of the whole for the OTAB bill, Bill 96; we will have second reading of employment equity, Bill 79, and second reading of the capital investment plan, Bill 17.

With that, I would move adjournment of the House.

The House adjourned at 0001.

CONTENTS

Tuesday 15 June 1993

SECOND READINGS

Retail Business Holidays Amendment Act (Sunday Shopping), 1993,

Bill 38

Mr Mammoliti . . . 1427, 1428, 1432, 1441, 1446

Mr Perruzza 1427, 1431, 1437, 1446, 1454, 1477

Mr Stockwell 1427, 1437

Mr Cousens 1428

Ms Haeck 1431

Mr White 1431, 1454

Ms Poole 1432, 1438

Mr Poirier 1437, 1443, 1447

Mr McLean 1438, 1440, 1463, 1470, 1476

Mr Arnott 1438, 1441

Mr Kormos 1440, 1459, 1464, 1470

Ms Murdock 1441

Mr Hope 1442

Mr Jordan 1446

Mr Wildman 1446, 1458

Mr Drainville 1447

Mr Abel 1448

Mr Mahoney 1449, 1455

Mr Marchese 1453

Mr Murphy 1455

Mr Sterling 1456, 1458, 1464

Mrs MacKinnon 1458

Mr Eddy 1458, 1476

Mr McGuinty 1464

Mr Ramsay 1464

Mr David Johnson 1467, 1470

Mr Bradley 1471

Mr Christopherson 1477

OTHER BUSINESS

Business of the House

Miss Martel 1477

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mardi 15 juin 1993

DEUXIÈME LECTURE

Loi de 1993 modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail (ouverture des commerces le dimanche)

M. Poirier 1437, 1443

CA201
X1
-D23

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Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
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Wednesday 16 June 1993

The House met at 1334.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Monday 14 June will go down as one of the darkest days in the history of this province and its Parliament. On that day Bob Rae and Floyd Laughren, by introducing the so-called Social Contract Act, introduced and became the authors of the most anti-democratic, anti-labour, anti-civil-rights piece of legislation that has ever been introduced in any Legislature in Canada.

One eminent lawyer described this bill as the most dramatic intrusion into the collective bargaining process that he had ever seen. We all agree that restraint in public expenditure is an important order of the day, but what Bob Rae has done is nothing short of a Kremlin-esque grab for power. He has chosen not only to restrain the rights of workers working with trade unions to negotiate their collective agreements but has summarily destroyed civil rights and simple rights, like the right to grieve and the right to complain, as a result of the arbitrary actions of employers.

Everyone in this province should see this legislation for what it is and see what a threat it represents to all of our civil liberties, the liberties that protect us in a free and democratic society.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): The social contract legislation introduced by the Treasurer does nothing to help municipalities confronted by enormous cuts to their transfer payments.

Municipal employer representatives acted in good faith by staying at the talks and remained committed to working out a solution with the NDP government to cut the deficit, save services and jobs and ensure no tax increases. The social contract legislation provides little assurance that savings will be found in compensation.

Many of Ontario's 839 municipalities believe a wage freeze will not provide the savings required to offset the NDP government's recent slashing of \$110 million in unconditional grants and the \$285-million cut to the public sector payrolls. The government has left municipalities with no choice but to lay off employees and cut services.

Municipal representatives are also alarmed about the distribution of the cuts to individual municipalities. Throughout the social contract discussions, municipalities focused on the need to reduce the sectoral target and recommended that one quarter of this year's impact be deferred to the second quarter of 1996, making the amount for 1993 no more than \$150 million.

This is a reasonable suggestion in recognition of a

fiscal year problem facing municipalities across Ontario. The Premier has an obligation to direct his government to help reduce the impact of midyear cuts on the beleaguered municipalities in Ontario.

Time is running out and the resumption of discussions must happen as soon as possible, before the social contract legislation becomes law.

RIDE FOR SIGHT

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I rise today in the House to inform the members of the Legislature of the 1993 Ride For Sight, a motorcycle event held in every province and territory in Canada during the month of June.

In 1979, a small number of motorcycle enthusiasts had the first rally and raised \$8,000. From this humble beginning, the Ride For Sight has developed into a national event with approximately 8,000 motorcyclists raising close to \$1 million in 1992 to fund eye research in Canada.

All the donor money raised on the Ride For Sight goes to retinitis pigmentosa research and other closely allied degenerations of the eye. Retinitis pigmentosa is a major cause of blindness in people between the ages of 6 and 60 and affects thousands of Canadians. Canadian scientists are recognized worldwide for their efforts in fighting this group of diseases. In Ontario, research is being conducted by scientists at the Hospital for Sick Children here in Toronto.

Participating motorcyclists are justifiably proud of their contribution in this successful work because the Ride For Sight is the largest source of private funding for eye research. In 1992, motorcyclists across Canada raised over \$835,000, of which over \$450,000 was raised in Ontario.

This year, Fenelon Falls hosts the Ride For Sight June 18, 19 and 20. Motorcyclists will be able to enjoy a full weekend of activities with their friends and families. The Ride For Sight weekend rally is a way to say thanks to all the motorcyclists and volunteers who took the time and made the effort to help others.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people involved in the Ride For Sight and their contributions towards retinitis pigmentosa research and to wish them the best for this weekend.

1340

COMPENSATION FOR AIDS PATIENTS

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): Mr Speaker, you will know that consistently since November 1991 I've been asking that the province of Ontario participate alongside the federal government in a compensation plan that would ensure that those who have contracted HIV through tainted blood and blood

products have security for themselves and for their families.

Quebec, Nova Scotia and Alberta have instituted plans to provide restitution, and in each case, those provincial plans have been introduced after extensive consultation on their design with organizations such as the Canadian Haemophilia Society, whose membership is substantially affected by this problem.

Last week, the Minister of Health said, outside of the House, "Governments in the past did not adopt policies that protected people who received blood." Clearly, she has accepted the liability of the government for its actions. She has speculated in the press that there may be a compensation plan, but unfortunately she has refused to meet with those very people who could assist in its design and ensure that an Ontario program meets the needs of those who have used and are affected by tainted blood and blood products.

We need to know what responsibility this government will take for the social and medical costs of a tainted blood supply, and that any Ontario plan is carefully and thoughtfully drafted with the input of those who are affected by it. The minister must ensure the consultation and involvement of those who received HIV-tainted blood.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): On May 7, a group of 35 grade 7 students from Zion Heights Junior High School came to Queen's Park to present a petition and letters to my office. They are concerned about the lack of government protection for endangered species.

There have been seven new additions to Canada's endangered species list. These additions bring the total number of endangered plant and animal species in Canada to 236. Approximately 40% of these species are found in what were once the great deciduous forests of southern Ontario and Quebec.

The most effective way of protecting these plants and animals from further loss would be to set aside habitats representative of each of the various land and sea ecosystems in Canada.

I would remind you that the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity calls for the preservation of 12% of each country's land as protected spaces, a target that was formally adopted by the federal and provincial Environment ministries.

Neither federal nor provincial wildlife laws require habitat protection or restoration efforts when a species is found to be threatened.

The students from Zion Heights feel strongly that without positive government action, Ontario will continue to lose its natural wildlife. They wrote letters to the Premier expressing their concerns and they compiled a petition demanding a moratorium to protect all endangered species and their habitats.

Much of the legal responsibility for protecting plants and animals falls within the provincial government's jurisdiction. I strongly support my constituents' demands and I urge the government to take immediate action to protect our natural wildlife.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mrs Ellen MacKinnon (Lambton): I wish to confirm my opposition to the North American free trade agreement and the negative impact this proposed deal will have on Ontario's agricultural industry.

The future viability of agriculture in this province and indeed the future of many of our family farms hangs in the balance as the federal government rushes towards the North American free trade agreement. That future is bleak if this deal is completed.

If the free trade agreement negotiated by the same federal government between Canada and the United States is an indication of how this wider agreement will be run, we risk losing much, especially on our farms and throughout our rural communities.

No one knows this better than many of my constituents in Lambton county. The pork producers in my riding, and across Ontario and Canada, are reeling from this latest decision made by the panel earlier this week that sided with the US Department of Commerce. The US claimed that live hogs exported from Canada to the US in 1989-90 were subject to countervailable duty rate because of our national tripartite system to the tune of some \$20 million.

The constant harassment of our hog and pork industries has not been ended by the free trade deal. Indeed, there seems to be a flagrant disregard of this deal by many American industries and within the US government.

Now on the heels of that disastrous free trade agreement comes NAFTA. NAFTA will not end American trade harassment. It will only add to the devastation started by the free trade agreement. The negatives of NAFTA are too much for our farmers and food industries to bear.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): I'd like to know where my Conservative colleagues stand on the social contract legislation.

When the NDP began its social contract negotiations, Mike Harris applauded the announcement. He told Bob Rae that he could count on his Tory party's support.

By the end of April, Mike Harris was saying, "I will support legislation—bang, bang, bang, first, second, third reading."

But then, by the end of May, they changed their tune. Members of the Conservative caucus said: "This process is flawed, badly flawed, from the beginning. It's a fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants process."

One week Mike Harris says, "I have supported social contract talks." The very next week Mike Harris says, "We have told you that the social contract talks could not possibly succeed."

Now the legislation is here, and on Monday, June 14, the Conservatives said two things: (1) They said they might support the legislation in principle and (2) Mike Harris, quoted on CHCH-TV, said he was going to try and defeat the legislation. I say to the Conservative caucus, which is it? I want to know and the people of Ontario want to know, where do the Conservatives stand on Bill 48, the social contract legislation?

We have a government, the NDP, which wakes up in the morning and creates party policy depending on where the wind blows. The Conservatives are no better. I say, do you support Bob Rae's draconian legislation or have you realized that it will not accomplish the goals that even this government says it wants to achieve?

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): If there were any doubts that the government is no longer listening to the concerns of the agricultural community, they no longer exist for farmers in the southern portion of my Simcoe West riding.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food or, as the farming community in my riding now refers to it, the ministry of aggravation and frustration, is coercing the town of New Tecumseth to rezone land from its current rural-agricultural designation to strictly an agricultural designation. Farmers in my riding know this single designation will sharply erode the value of their lands.

But instead of listening to my constituents and advocating on their behalf, ministry officials are strong-arming New Tecumseth farmers into agreeing to this rezoning.

I quote from a letter to the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food written by Ontario Federation of Agriculture President Roger George regarding the conduct displayed by a ministry official to my constituents at a recent meeting in the riding:

"I regret to report that Ms Johnston's attitude brought little credit to OMAF, the bureaucracy or the government of Ontario. Quite frankly it was seen as, 'My way or the doorway.'"

As well, my constituents were left with the impression that any future support from the government would be linked to their surrender on this rezoning issue.

The minister and his officials know full well that this rezoning will erect another barrier to the viability and sustainability of agriculture in my riding.

Agriculture bureaucrats need to remember whom they represent. Without farmers there is no Ministry of Agriculture and Food. If the ministry is to be relevant, it needs to start pleading the case of farmers and not working against them and insulting them.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): When I think of the social contract, its purpose and the way it will help us achieve our economic goals, it brings to mind the success of the Spruce Falls mill in Kapuskasing. When it became public knowledge that the mill was in a difficult economic situation, the employees realized they had to participate. They became involved in negotiating a settlement that would protect as many jobs as possible.

A government deficit can be looked on in much the same way as private industry deficits. You can only go on borrowing for so long before your creditors withdraw and your investors spend elsewhere. We know that if our government continues to borrow and spend without controlling our spending, we will see massive transfers of wealth going to bondholders, much of it outside Canada. We will then have less money for job creation programs, economic renewal and services such as health and education.

Much the same way the employees of Spruce Falls had the option of being involved in creating a strategic buyout plan, public service employees too have a similar option. They have the option to be involved in decisions that will ultimately determine their own economic future as well as that of others.

1350

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr Will Ferguson (Kitchener): In April 1992, I asked the Ministry of Transportation for an early installation date of median barriers on the Conestoga Parkway in Kitchener. At that time I said it would be a move that would obviously prevent collisions, prevent accidents and would save lives. This expressway was built over 26 years ago in my community, and certainly is due for some major improvements and changes.

Yesterday, three residents of my community were killed instantly in yet another crossover accident collision. Yesterday's triple fatality was the latest in a string of collisions that have occurred over the past three years leaving seven people dead and countless numbers injured.

A coroner's inquest into one of the deaths recommended that median barriers be installed to prevent similar accidents in the future. Twenty months have passed and median barriers have not yet been installed on this stretch of roadway.

Today, I call on the Minister of Transportation to move up the projected 1996 planned installation date of median barriers on the parkway so that lives will no longer be lost on this stretch of Ontario's highways.

I know that all of my colleagues join with me in extending our sincere sympathies to the families of the victims, Derek Fidler, Ryan Short and Herbert Hombach.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I would like to invite all members to welcome to our chamber this afternoon a former member of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, and indeed a former minister of the crown, Mr Alex Macdonald. Welcome.

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES**

MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Today, I am pleased to release Putting People First, Ontario's framework for mental health reform. We can now move forward to create an effective mental health system that responds to the needs of each individual.

Our first priority is to meet the needs of people who need help most, those with severe mental illness. We know the most vulnerable require services that are consumer-oriented and sensitive to gender, culture, race and language.

The Ministry of Health spends more than \$1.3 billion annually on mental health. We provide a number of excellent mental health programs, yet the vital links between them that would ensure we are reaching those most in need, and providing them with proper community support and a smooth transition from one service to another, are often missing.

Using the principles set out in Putting People First, we will transform a group of fragmented services to a strong coordinated system. We will see hospital and community-based services working together to build a better mental health system.

The reform process began in 1988 with the Graham report Building Community Supports for People. Reform continued with an extensive consultation process and detailed planning by district health councils and provincial psychiatric hospitals.

This government has already passed legislation dealing with key issues for mental health reform, the Consent to Treatment Act, Substitute Decisions Act and the Advocacy Act.

These acts reinforce the right of people in all settings to make decisions if they are mentally capable of doing so, and enable them to designate someone they trust to make decisions for them if they become incapable.

These acts also provide new ways to protect the wellbeing and rights of people when they lack mental capacity by correcting significant gaps and inconsistencies in our present laws.

As we turn our attention to the necessary system changes, let me state for this House our government's commitment to providing the necessary community services, just as we have for long-term care. In 1978, I was a member of Etobicoke city council when Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital was closed without any alternative services in place in my community. That

experience will not be repeated.

Community-based mental health programs and services have grown from \$42.9 million in 1985-86 to over \$170 million in 1993-94, a growth of 400%. This expansion of community mental health programs will continue as we reallocate funding within our mental health budget.

Our long-term care reform will also provide more support in the community to elderly people with mental health problems who can now receive treatment in the community rather than being institutionalized.

In some places, reform is already in action. In Hamilton, for example, the psychiatric hospital runs the Annex, a supportive housing program for people with schizophrenia. Abel Enterprises, a business cooperative in Simcoe, helps consumers-survivors live in the community and maintain stable jobs. Programs like these are building blocks of our mental health reform.

To achieve our vision for the mental health system, we will focus on four key services and supports, namely, case management, 24-hour crisis intervention, housing, and consumer-survivor and family supports to help people manage their illness and reduce hospitalization.

Strong local and regional planning under the leadership of district health councils will allow people to move easily within the system and ensure that no part of the province is left unserved. Each part of the system will be clearly defined and realigned to provide a mix of services and avoid gaps and duplication.

We will determine the appropriate role for hospitals, community-based programs, homes for special care and services run by consumers-survivors.

Special programs will be developed to meet the needs of those with severe mental illness and the unique needs of women, children, people with developmental disabilities, francophones, elderly people, members of ethno-cultural groups and mentally disordered offenders and accused persons.

The ministry will develop a human resources strategy to support this reform. The strategy will reflect collective agreements and legislation. We will ensure that workers who provide direct care in the provincial psychiatric hospitals will have the opportunity to work in the community, and we will provide opportunities for retaining as necessary.

In 1993, institutional care, excluding services covered by the Ontario health insurance plan, took about 80% of the mental health budget, with the remainder going to community services. By the year 2003, Ontario will be spending 60% on community care.

Despite the focus on community services, the government, as always, recognizes the importance of hospital services in the treatment of mental illness. To demonstrate this, I'm pleased to announce that this fall we will

start the construction of a new 325-bed psychiatric hospital in Whitby.

We have committed \$133.5 million to this project which will create 2,200 construction-related jobs per year and stimulate the local economy. The hospital is expected to open in December 1996.

This new hospital will reflect our new vision of reform in many ways. It will increase its ties with the community and general hospitals, and expand its outpatient and day hospital programs so that people can receive treatment in their own community. As well, it will serve as a tertiary care facility offering specialized programs for the seriously mentally ill in the area.

Today is a proud day for the mental health community in this province. For the first time, Ontario has a clearly defined framework for a mental health system, a framework that reflects the thinking of those directly involved in the system, a framework that has government support and commitment, a framework that puts people first.

It's a day that's been a long time coming and that a lot of people have worked for for a long time, and there are some people in the gallery today whose names I would like to read into the record so that they could stand when I've finished and be recognized. We have Steve Pierce, Carole Roup, Chris Higgins, Don Wasylenki, Pat Capponi, Steve Lurie, Brian Davidson, Jessica Hill, Glen Thompson and Larry Corea, and I'd like to acknowledge their work in making this a reality.

1400

NATIVE INFORMATION SERVICES

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I am pleased to report today that my ministry has concluded its consultations with the aboriginal community in response to the native information services task force report.

We have found a strong consensus in support of task force recommendations and, as a result, are pleased to announce today two key initiatives in support of first nation library and information services.

As my colleagues are aware, the task force was established two years ago in response to an urgent need for equitable and culturally appropriate information services to the aboriginal community. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the task force for their commitment and determination, as well as all the aboriginal groups and organizations that we've consulted with over the past year.

Our government is deeply committed to the idea that all people and all regions of the province should be fairly represented and given the opportunity to reach their full potential. We believe that all Ontarians must have equity of access to information to help them understand and deal with the changes and challenges of our society.

In first nation communities, the library is often the only resource for disseminating information and articulating and preserving heritage. Equal access to quality library service is critical. Yet, unlike municipal public libraries, first nation libraries have no local tax base from which to draw funding support. Even though my ministry provides funding through various programs, these libraries remain chronically underfunded, resulting in an inequity in library service to first nation communities.

The initiatives I'm announcing today are historically long overdue. They support our government's commitment to the principle of aboriginal self-determination in meeting the current and future needs of aboriginal communities.

First, I am pleased to announce \$234,000 in salary subsidy grants to first nation libraries in southern Ontario. Added to funding already in place for first nation libraries in northern Ontario, this brings my ministry's total support for the program to \$572,000 for this fiscal year. This initiative will help to stabilize the operations of first nation libraries and improve services to first nation communities right across Ontario.

Our second initiative is the creation of a steering committee to work with my ministry to develop a framework for a province-wide native library and information service. The committee will be made up of representatives from the aboriginal community. These initiatives support the task force recommendations.

I am pleased we have been able to tackle some of the pressing information needs of first nation communities within the context of today's tough economic climate. Now, more than ever, we need services that provide timely, accurate and relevant information to help us become more knowledgeable, better trained and more competitive. By bringing stability to native library and information services, we are contributing immensely to the quality of life of all Ontarians.

MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): We were pleased to see that the minister finally made a statement in the House with respect to health care policy, rather than outside of the House. However, it has just come to my attention that the minister also announced today, outside of the House, a review of all Metro health services which she said may result in the closure of facilities, including hospitals. That material and that information should have been brought here to us today. If she can make that announcement outside the House, she can make it inside the House.

I want to turn to The Reform of Mental Health Services in Ontario, the report the minister put on our desks today. This is an area that has been of concern to us for some time, and I want to refer back to the Graham report, which indicated in 1988, when it was first presented, that about "one and one half million

people living in Ontario have some form of mental illness; 38,000 are severely disabled by schizophrenia, affective disorders and other mental illnesses." That comes to about 4.1 per 1,000 population. This is not an insignificant portion of our population requiring services.

None the less, as I look at the report which has been put forward today, what I see is a return, in my view at this point of analysis, to a position we were in before the Graham report was introduced in 1988. In other words, what we have is a framework for developing strategies, for putting forward ideas. We do not have an action plan, which is something that everybody in the province has demanded.

Once again, I want to move back to the Graham report, which talked about what the priorities should be in an action plan that was laid forward, in terms of its final recommendations, five years ago. The priority that the Graham report identified was for crisis and residential support, case management, self-help and family support, social and vocational support and the coordination of local services.

Instead of addressing those particular issues, what we have in this report today is a strategy which reads as follows: establish a system, create a structure, define roles, develop programs, develop a strategy, establish targets. There is no action plan involved here. There is a planning process put before us when what is needed is something much more significant than that.

I want to turn to a page in the document towards the end which describes the ministry's plan to cut what are now psychiatric beds in Ontario from 58 to 30. The minister says that will bring us in line with targets in other communities.

One of the areas of serious concern with respect to this decision is that as that cut is made, there is no new money allocated or included in a long-term plan for increasing community-based services for mental health care delivery. Indeed, we know now that the entire system is underfunded. That has been a problem that did not start with this government, that was a problem in the past, but we do not see any new funds entering the system to support the shift to community-based care which the Graham report and clearly the government strategy envisages and that every organization in the community demands.

Further, in conclusion, I want to say that I welcome the news about the expansion of the Whitby Psychiatric Hospital. I think that will be a useful addition to the health system.

However, I want to raise and bring to the House's attention other decisions the government has made with respect to psychiatric patients. Buried in the back pages of this year's budget is a decision that the government will be charging psychiatric patients who are residents

in psychiatric hospitals for the use of that space, a clear attack on one of the most vulnerable groups of people in our society.

NATIVE INFORMATION SERVICES

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I know that the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation stood up today and made some comments in regard to the native information services task force. I thought maybe the minister was going to stand up today and give us a report on the announcement she made to the tourism people yesterday, a report that was very short in funding and very lacking in doing something to assist the tourism industry, but I guess that report is not coming forth.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I'm pleased to stand in response to the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation and her announcement on native library information services. Certainly, no resident of Ontario should be denied access to library services. No resident of Ontario, no matter where they live or who they are, should be denied access to library services, although we have seen in the past the funding for the library service in northern Ontario as a whole in a situation of steady decline in terms of real dollars since 1986. That's an additional concern, that has not been addressed by this announcement. Certainly, our party is supportive of efforts to ensure access to libraries all across the province with respect to education and with respect to heritage in all communities. Our PC caucus is supportive of this principle.

1410

MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I'm pleased to rise for a brief moment and comment upon the announcement that was made and the paper put forward by the Minister of Health concerning mental health services in Ontario.

I want to say at the beginning that I think the paper is quite vague. There are no time lines for actions being laid out. We're told once again by this government that it's come out with another 10-year strategy. Frankly, this government won't be around in 10 years to implement some of the suggestions in this report.

The minister talks about benchmarks and goals that will be used to ensure progress and measure the success of the reform that the government says it is launching, yet there is no detail of what these benchmarks are and where they are to be applied. There are loose details on the transition period that's discussed in the report. There's a lot of talk about district health councils and contributions of regional psychiatric hospitals, but there's no clear agenda or guidelines of how to proceed with this reform.

There are no new dollars, as has been pointed out earlier. If there's one thing that's become clear to me and clear to my party with respect to money, as we

move from institutional services to community-based services in health care, it is that there's going to have to be a reallocation within existing government budgets of significant dollars to move us towards a community-based system. I have said for some two years that we're going to have to stop building roads for a year or something to ensure that there is money put into building up community-based services, because the fact is that far too many politicians—and this government is particularly guilty on this matter—have spoken about the move towards community-based services, but in fact we've seen a cut in community-based services across this province. It's time to stop misleading the public when it comes to community-based care.

This document today does nothing to dispel the myths out there and simply promotes the propaganda of the NDP when it comes to mental health reform and the move towards community-based services. There are substantial mental health needs across this province, which are not being met and which are not being met once again in this report.

In May of last year, I stood in this House and urged the government to take action on reforming mental health: 75,000 Ontarians have a serious mental illness, 1.5 million Ontarians seek mental health care each year, 140 people with psychiatric problems are discharged from hospitals each and every day in this province, and the community-based services are not in place to help them with their problems and to help them to become fully productive citizens of this province. Between 30% and 40% of homeless people—those are the people we see as we walk to work, as we walk to this palace, the people on the streets of Toronto and across this province—30% to 40% of them have mental illness problems. That is the root of their homelessness, it is the root of their problems, and this government does nothing but once again pay lipservice.

In Peterborough there are more than 70 people on waiting lists for community mental health housing, including 13 young adults.

In summation, I'm extremely disappointed with the minister's announcement today. I don't think it furthers the cause my party has fought for or that the Canadian Mental Health Association has fought for. It leaves people with mental illness still in the dark ages and does nothing to truly reform our health care system. It's a slash-and-burn approach. On one hand, the government announced just before this announcement that it was going to gut mental health services and then has the gall to come into the House and says it's beefing up mental health services with a new community approach.

There's nothing new, there's no new money and there's very clear evidence that mental health reform is not a priority of this government. I'm disappointed, and I would ask the minister to save the paper: Don't bother distributing this to the thousands of groups out there

who are interested in mental health reform. Go back to the drawing board. Take some of our suggestions. Use some common sense and deal with the real problems of people with mental health in this province.

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): I have in front of me a letter to the editor published in the Toronto Star on June 14. This letter is from the assistant Deputy Minister of Transportation, Kim Devooght. In her letter to the Star, the ADM says that "an all-party committee" will hold public hearings this summer on the graduated licensing project.

My point is, how can the ADM direct the affairs of this House? As late as this morning, there has been no consultation with my House leader or with me, as the Liberal Transportation critic. How are we to have an all-party committee if there's no consultation with the two other parties on when and how these consultations are to take place?

Mr Speaker, I think the privileges of this House are being infringed when senior civil servants start to dictate the agenda of this House, and I'd ask you to investigate this matter.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member for Nepean, I appreciate the concern which he raises. Indeed, he is correct. The House determines its business.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Would the member for York Centre please come to order.

The member does not have a point of privilege, but he's expressed his concerns quite well.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Mr Speaker, I'd like to raise a point of order of some grave concern about how this government is treating the opposition parties these days and making it very difficult for us to function.

Under section 32(a) relating to ministerial statements, "A minister of the crown may make a short factual statement relating to government policy, ministry action or other similar matters of which the House should be informed.

"(b) The time allotted to ministerial statements shall not exceed 20 minutes without the unanimous consent of the House."

And the operative clause for my point of order: "(c) Two copies of each ministerial statement shall be delivered to opposition party leaders, or their representatives, at or before the time the statement is made in the House."

We just heard a statement made under this section by the Honourable Anne Swarbrick, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation. That was a statement about native library and information services which was delivered to my leader in an envelope on her desk.

Clause (c) goes on to say that the representatives shall also receive a second copy—presumably, you would assume, of the same statement. Presumably, you would get two copies of the same statement by the same minister being read on the same day. We had delivered to our representatives, to give to our critic, a statement by the minister on an enhanced \$10-million financial assistance package for Ontario tourism. As a result, we had our critic and our people working on responding to a statement announcing a \$10-million juggling of the books; it's not even new money, but a \$10-million juggling of the books.

So we had our critic responding, our staff being given one piece of information and the minister reading another. These people couldn't run a hot dog stand. When are they going to get it right?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I appreciate the member's point of order. Can the minister be of some assistance in this regard?

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I'd certainly like to apologize if the statement that I made did not get to you on time, because that obviously is totally unacceptable.

In terms of the one that you did receive, that was a media release that we sent out this morning which I had indicated to the critic in your party in a note yesterday, since I missed him in person, that we would be making and indicated in person to the opposition critic in the Conservatives that we'd be making.

We were not making that as a statement in the House because, as you pointed out, in fact it is existing money. On the other hand, it is money that Tourism Ontario, I know, and the tourism operators I met with yesterday were quite happy to have redirected into the needs that they face now in the 1990s instead of what the—

The Speaker: Would the minister take her seat, please.

Mr Mahoney: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: You raised a point of order. If you wish to raise a new and different one, fine, but I'll deal with this one first. In fact, the member has a point of order. Indeed, the standing order calls for two copies. As the minister has indicated, there was an error for which she has taken responsibility. Hopefully, that type of error will not occur again.

The member has a new point of order?

Mr Mahoney: The point of order would be, and I appreciate the apology, that the minister has taken an opportunity to now in fact make a ministerial statement announcing this \$10-million adjustment of funds. I just heard her. It will be in Hansard. I would like to ask for unanimous consent for five minutes' response time for each party.

The Speaker: The member will know that at the moment that I was aware that the minister was not

sticking to a point of order, but indeed straying beyond that, I stood. The moment the Speaker stands, the microphones are cut off; there is no taping and the camera is on the Speaker. In fact, whatever the minister wishes to announce was in fact not announced.

1420

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): Mr Speaker, on another point of order, and I normally wouldn't raise a point of order before question period, but I'd like to give you some time to consider this point of order, which will arise immediately when we get to orders of the day today: If you will note on today's business sheet for Wednesday, June 16, under "Orders of the day," the first item of business is order number 22, which in fact is a deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 38.

The second item of business is number 9, committee of the whole House on Bill 96, which is OTAB. That is being done pursuant to a time allocation motion which the government passed last week.

If I might read just very briefly, in part, from that time allocation motion, it goes on to say, "In relation to Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, the period of time following routine proceedings when Bill 96 is called as the first order of business until 5 pm on that same sessional day shall be allotted to further consideration of this bill in committee of the whole House."

I requested earlier today that the government House leader consider deferring the vote on Bill 38 until later in the day, perhaps after we vote on Bill 96, which we will have to do at 5 pm in any event, because if he does not agree to do that, and so far he has not, in my opinion it would appear—and I'm asking you for guidance on this—that it will not be the first order of the day. It will be the second order of the day and Bill 96 can't be dealt with today then.

I would ask you for your consideration of that, and when we get to orders of the day later on, I'd appreciate an interpretation from you on whether we can deal with OTAB in committee of the whole this afternoon.

The Speaker: The member for Parry Sound raises a serious point of procedure. May I say first that I appreciate the fact that he has raised it now and that I indeed will deliberate on the matter and be able to provide an answer by the end of routine proceedings.

In the interim, of course, there's always the opportunity for the three House leaders to discuss the business of the House and perhaps come to some agreement that would accommodate the wishes on both sides of the House. But I will have a response for you before we reach orders of the day.

I would like to return to the member from Mississauga West. Although there was not a statement made, if the member was asking for unanimous consent

for the minister to make a statement, indeed that's perfectly in order and I will now put that question.

Is there unanimous consent for the minister to make a statement? I heard at least one negative voice.

Mr Mahoney: I'm curious towards your ruling. Maybe you could help me. Did you say that there indeed was a ministerial statement made? Clearly, Hansard will show that before you stood up and turned off the microphone, comments were made by the minister. I would ask the government to at least allow a couple of minutes for each opposition party to respond in this place to this announcement.

The Speaker: I apologize if I did not make myself clear. There was not a ministerial statement. I interrupted the minister at the moment that she had strayed from the point of order. I then put a question to the House allowing for unanimous consent for the minister to make a statement. That has been denied. It is time for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My questions will be to the Premier. We all support responsible restraint. I want to tell you today that we do not believe that Bill 48, your social contract legislation, saves the taxpayers money. It simply puts off costs until the future. I want to give you some specifics of that.

The legislation very specifically states that employees who perform critical functions—and this would likely include at least health care workers, police and firefighters—could be required to take up to 36 days of their normal vacation time as unpaid leave over three years. Yesterday, the Minister of Finance denied that this provision would cost transfer partners any additional money in the future. But, Premier, I bring to your attention section 26 of Bill 48, which deals with special leave and which states very clearly, "The employer shall grant to the employee the same number of compensating days off," and, "The compensating days off...may be carried forward to future years...after March 31, 1996."

That simply means either you don't save the costs today or you put them off until tomorrow. I ask you how you can possibly defer these kinds of costs until some distant point in the future. I ask whether you have looked at how many people will be affected by this special leave category. Have you even begun to assess the impact of future costs that this provision will bring?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I think the member, frankly, on this occasion is just wrong. The purpose of this section is to allow for flexibility in scheduling matters. I think it's important to emphasize as well that the member has already turned her attention to what happens where there are no agreements after August 1. We remain optimistic that in fact agreements can be achieved in sectors and that this can happen.

When she talks about this question of compensating days, what it says is:

"The compensating days off,

"(a)"—she didn't read this part—"shall be paid days off, taken on mutually convenient dates;

"(b) may be carried forward to future years...after March 31, 1996; and

"(c)"—listen to this one, because you might not have heard this one—"may not be converted to money."

What we are talking about here is time off. We're talking about recognizing that there has to be some flexibility with respect to scheduling in those areas where simply providing for unpaid leaves of absence may not be possible. That's all it does.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, let me try and explain the legislation to you, and we have read it in some detail. The legislation says "shall." Now, I do not have legal training, but I would understand that that would be interpreted as being mandatory—no choice, no flexibility, no mutual agreement other than perhaps when those days are to be taken off. This is for a category of workers called "essential services." That's why they need some special consideration. They cannot leave their work without having somebody else take their place at a cost to the employer. This is a deferred cost, and I am appalled that you do not understand that and have done no assessment of the impact of this cost.

Premier, the bottom line is that this clause, and many other parts of this bill, ensure that your bill is not going to accomplish the kind of spending restraint that you set out to achieve. I want to give you more evidence of that.

When you released your final social contract proposal, it included a provision to protect people who were earning less than \$30,000. At that time, you said you could bump up that threshold from \$25,000 to \$30,000 by using \$400 million in pension savings. We are now told that this same \$400 million in pension savings will be used as an incentive to encourage municipalities, school boards, hospitals and colleges and universities to reach a deal.

Premier, I'm asking you how you can use the same \$400 million twice. Are you going to use it to protect workers earning less than \$30,000 or are you going to use it to reduce the cuts the transfer partners are going to have to make? You can only use it once. Which is it going to be?

Hon Mr Rae: I would just say to the honourable member again, we are of the view—we are determined to negotiate this with our partners—that there can be savings with respect to pension contributions for future years on an actuarial basis. That's true, that's reasonable and we think that is a perfectly reasonable assumption.

I also want to stress, since the member has raised the issue of pensions, that the legislation makes it very clear

that nothing in this bill authorizes the government to take any money out of a pension plan, which is a canard that is being spread by some people. I think the member, in terms of her approach to the numbers, is simply wrong. I think she's misinterpreted the first question and I think she has the second one as well.

Mrs McLeod: I think quite frankly that you don't understand the legislation you presented in this House earlier this week. I would say to you that this is not responsible and that it means one of two things: either you don't plan to bring this legislation forward or you live in a dream world and don't ever think you're going to have to implement it. This is completely irresponsible action.

One more example, one more question, Premier: Last week you were quoted—I heard the quote directly—finally acknowledging that comprehensive solutions will not work and that's why you were bringing in the legislation.

I believe you should have realized that last April when you told workers in the city of Hamilton that they should be exempt from any provisions that would be reached in a social contract because they had done enough.

I would think you would surely realize that if this legislation is to be fair and equitable, as you want to keep describing it, there would have to be many exemptions. You must be aware that there are many municipalities and school boards and hospitals and colleges and universities across this province that have already implemented wage freezes or unpaid leaves.

Those Hamilton workers, who, you'll remember, you were prepared to exempt, had already taken unpaid leave. Metropolitan Toronto already has imposed a wage freeze and unpaid leave. I ask you today, will employers that have already implemented wage freezes or unpaid leave be exempt from the provisions of Bill 48 or will their workers have to make extra sacrifices? What are you going to say to the Hamilton workers now?

1430

Hon Mr Rae: The member says she heard the quote. I can only say to her that the word saying there would be a blanket exemption for any group of people or for any municipality, to suggest that, is not something that I would say. So I would say, you got the first question wrong, you got the second question wrong and the assumption of the third question is wrong as well. You're batting zero for three, as I count it. I say that with the deepest of respect.

I would simply say directly to the honourable member, obviously—and this again is where the legislation is intended to provide a degree of flexibility and so are the negotiations intended to provide a degree of flexibility—the purpose is to recognize that where people have already made a substantial sacrifice or where they have

already taken steps, such as the ones that have been suggested, obviously that is a factor that would be taken into account; no blanket exemption, but obviously a factor that would be taken into account.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question.

Mrs McLeod: Be careful, Premier, because I believe it is you who have got it wrong, and zero out of three means "out." I say to you, Premier, in utter frustration, if you really believe this is good legislation, bring it in and let us vote on it now.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. It's nice that this is a popular place, but perhaps we could also have some questions. The Leader of the Opposition.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Again to the Premier, over the past couple of days we've been concentrating all of our energies on one of the worst pieces of legislation ever presented in Ontario. Now we've discovered that the Health minister has just quietly introduced another bill that is equally shocking. I might describe it as another Michael Dexter marvel. This Minister of Health has been making up health care policy on the run and the bill that she has introduced now gives her the legal power to keep doing that.

Premier, for your awareness, the expenditure control plan act that this minister introduced on Monday gives the minister and her bureaucrats the power to determine what medical services will be delivered, how often a patient can receive a specific medical service and how often a doctor can provide a particular medical service to a patient.

Bureaucrats in the Ministry of Health are not qualified to make these kinds of decisions and I ask you whether you really believe that the bureaucrats in the Ministry of Health are the best ones qualified to decide what kind of care a patient gets?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'll refer that question to the Minister of Health.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): As I think members of the House are aware, this ministry, under the leadership of my predecessor and again this year, has been making remarkable attempts and success in reducing health care costs. This year we have clearly outlined in the budget presented by the Minister of Finance some expenditure control measures that need to be taken if we are in fact to contain costs this year. In order to achieve that, we are actively, as we speak, negotiating with the Ontario Medical Association.

As in the case of the social contract legislation, we have introduced legislation that will ensure that we in fact meet those financial targets whether or not we can succeed in the negotiations, and I am confident that we will succeed. But to suggest that anything we have suggested as a way of controlling our expenditures is

going to have the effect of diminishing the quality of health care services in this province is in fact not the case.

Mrs McLeod: Minister, the powers that you have taken unto yourself with this legislation are incredibly sweeping. You have already referenced in your answer the work, the leadership, of your predecessor in the Ministry of Health, and I would, quite frankly, today agree with you.

I would express my dismay that the action that you have taken in bringing forward this legislation has destroyed those very positive steps that the previous Minister of Health was taking: to work jointly with the medical profession, to get health care costs under control and still provide quality care to patients.

I ask you why you have abandoned the efforts that were being made by your own government to determine how we can provide effective and high-quality health care in a cost-effective way. If you planned to negotiate, why did you need this legislation to give you these kinds of sweeping powers?

Hon Mrs Grier: This government set out to negotiate a social contract that would enable us to achieve our budgetary targets and at the same time ensure that a contribution to achieving those targets was made fairly by all people who received remuneration from the public taxpayers.

Part of that was to increase our efforts to work with the medical profession and other stakeholders in the health care system to better manage the resources that we now have and to ensure that we protect medicare and maintain it as a high-quality, affordable and accessible system. If we are unable through negotiation to contain those costs, we have introduced legislation that enables us to obtain those savings without negotiation.

I remain fully confident that because of the desire of the medical profession to maintain the negotiated status that has been achieved through the framework agreement, we'll be successful, but we cannot put a health care system at risk by not making it very clear that there are savings that have to be obtained.

Mrs McLeod: It is absolutely crucial that we all understand what this bill does: that this bill gives this minister, gives any minister, far too much power to make medical decisions on the patient's behalf.

The Minister of Health has said that she hopes to negotiate the savings targets that the Minister of Finance has set out, savings targets that are going to be achieved by clearly restricting the medical services that patients can receive. She needs this bill to give her the power to make unilateral decisions about those medical services, and there is nobody who has confidence in this minister's ability, or any minister's ability, to make those kinds of decisions about what constitutes effective medical care.

I want to know how this minister and this government plan to use the powers that this legislation gives. How will the minister and her bureaucrats decide what kinds of services are going to be cut from medicare? How are they going to decide what services should be limited? On what basis will you decide what services are medically necessary? When did Ruth Grier and the Ministry of Health bureaucrats become qualified to make these kinds of decisions?

Hon Mrs Grier: First of all, let me make it very plain that none of the expenditure control measures that we have discussed relate to medically necessary services. When you ask the question of how in fact decisions will be made with respect to those expenditure control measures, let me say to you that all of the suggestions we have made are entirely consistent with our goals of reducing the growth of expenditures and maintaining the system, and it is our intent, it is our desire and it is our expectation that we will continue to make those decisions in consultation with all of the people involved.

1440

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question's to the Premier, on the first chance we've had to ask him about his social contract legislation. Premier, on Monday I set out six guidelines that we hoped to see in your social contract legislation. They weren't there. Our proposals are designed to assist with permanently downsizing the cost and the scope of government without creating chaos. Our six points were a sound, constructive addition, I believe, to your legislation.

I know you're looking for solutions to downsize the size and cost of government, goals that only two parties in this province agree with, and we are supportive of those goals. But given that your bill was rather hastily drafted and given that it has some flaws, I believe, because of that, I would ask you this: Are you prepared to look at the types of amendments that we are putting forward that we believe will, without as much chaos, lead to a more permanent downsizing of the size and cost of government?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I would say to the honourable member that of course we would consider any reasonable amendments. I've seen a number of the proposals that the honourable member has put forward and I would say of the six points that he makes that there's much merit in the House having an opportunity to discuss those.

I was intrigued by the Liberal leader suggesting that we have a vote right away. Certainly we're ready for one and happy to have one. We're also happy to have amendments moved in committee of the whole and for that discussion to take place. But look, I would say without any hesitation that any reasonable amendments that are put forward by any member of the House would

be considered by a reasonable government, which we certainly are.

Mr Harris: Mr Premier, we too are ready to begin the debate today or a vote today on second reading, getting on with the amendments.

Interjections.

Mr Harris: I hear the Liberal interjections, but clearly the lines are being drawn between those who seek change and reform—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order, the member for York Centre.

Mr Harris: —and those who don't, who want to play the old politics of the past. We understand that, and if those are the politics they wish to play, I wish them luck.

One of the components of our plan is an immediate three-year public sector hiring freeze. When coupled with a wage freeze that would commence on the anniversary date of all contracts, this will assist in leading to a long-term structural downsizing in both the cost and the size of government—not the only answer but an assist. With some flexibility for essential programs we all agree with, with retraining, which we think should be a strong component as well, I believe this is a very constructive, permanent plan, an amendment that should be acceptable to you.

I would ask you, since I've raised this before, and then we detailed it a little more on Monday, will you agree to consider this proposal that, unlike the legislation you've put forward, does not gut existing contracts and does not lead to unnecessary layoffs?

Hon Mr Rae: We don't think our legislation either guts anything or should lead to layoffs. Our view is that we are giving a six-week period during which there need to be extensive discussions and extensive negotiations. There is that provision in the legislation specifically to allow and to provide for that.

Obviously we looked at some of the proposals that the honourable member has put forward. At the senior management group level there is a freeze. In what we call the common services policy areas there is already a freeze in place. We've severely restricted access to external hiring within the public service for several months now.

We're also finding that through the voluntary exit programs and through the early retirement programs that we've put in place, there will in fact be a major, serious reduction in the size of the public service to achieve the objective which the member has put forward.

I've been asking for several months now about the relative merits of a complete freeze versus some flexibility that allows you to deal with special circumstances. If you just have a freeze, you then end up hiring people on contract all the time, which is what your previous

administration did whenever we went into those areas. I want to avoid that kind of a fake numbers game. We want to get the real numbers down.

We also have to recognize that if we—

The Speaker: Will the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —simply said, "Well, we'll carry on all contracts until they expire and then add on," you could be looking at a freeze in some instances that could extend until 1998, which struck us as really quite unfair and unrealistic in the circumstances.

I would say to the member that we're looking hard at the proposals that he's bringing forward and that others are bringing forward—

The Speaker: Will the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: —and I'm quite happy if we have the debate and the vote today, tomorrow, whenever the opposition is ready to vote and debate, so are we, and we're ready to get on with getting it into committee as soon as possible. The—

The Speaker: Will the Premier please take his seat. Final supplementary.

Mr Harris: Premier, I want to be very clear so that you know that unlike the Liberals, who in government and in opposition dismissed restraint out of hand—we've seen that—we are trying to offer constructive proposals.

I'm prepared to work with you to improve legislation that all Ontarians can live with. We need legislation that encourages leaner, more efficient government, and your legislation, Premier, does do that. We agree with that. But your bill also penalizes municipalities, school boards, unions and groups from permanently downsizing, and in some cases only puts off the inevitable until 1996.

For example, Premier, when we talked to George Thomson at the briefing on this legislation, I gave him an example that if a municipality came to an agreement with its employees that permanently downsized at the end of three years by 10%—double the achieving that you were hoping to achieve, but it took three years to do it—that would not be acceptable. In fact, under this legislation, he confirmed to me that wouldn't be acceptable.

What we are trying to, by way of amendment, allow in your legislation is, instead of thwarting the long-term downsizing and then rewarding it—encouraging the short-term days off, which will only have to come back to us—we're trying to look for a permanent solution. Would you agree that if we can find permanent long-term solutions to reduce more than you're after, that would be preferable to short-term solutions that are going to have to be picked up again perhaps in legislation?

Hon Mr Rae: Let me just say to the member that I'm delighted to hear some of the suggestions he has. I must say that we're trying to find—

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Your office is shuddering.

Hon Mr Rae: No, I don't see that. I think you're all quite relaxed, from what I can tell.

I would say to the honourable member that we're obviously interested in the kinds of solutions he's putting forward and the kinds of proposals that have been put forward as we would from anyone else, as we would from municipalities, from colleges and universities and others who would be putting forward ideas, and others in the public sector and in the private sector.

We do have to get on with it, however. We do have to set clearly some kind of framework that will truly encourage negotiations, which is why in particular I accept his offer to get on with the debate and to get on with the vote on second reading. That's fine with me and fine with our party. Get it into committee of the whole and get some real discussion on the amendments on a practical basis. I'm delighted to do that, delighted.

TAX INCREASES

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): My question's for the Premier, a question on your taxation policy. Tomorrow, around noon, we're going to see angry taxpayers again making their annual pilgrimage to Queen's Park to express their concern about your taxation policy. Once again, they want to tell you just what they think of your budget. They're fed up with having to shoulder the high cost of government, that they're having to pay more than their fair share of the New Democratic Party's policies and platform costs and the high spending they inherited from the Liberals before them.

It's high time for you, as a government, to understand the very negative impact that your taxation policy is having on the people in Ontario. The damage it's causing is long term: the loss in jobs to those people who are losing their jobs because of the high taxes, the curse that you're placing on businesses that is causing them to lose confidence in Ontario, the lack of competitive advantage that we have in Ontario over what we used to have, the need for a government to give encouragement and hope rather than take it away.

1450

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Cousens: How will you explain, Mr Premier, to the people at Queen's Park tomorrow that despite your rhetoric on the budget and despite the fact that you've increased your spending this year, how you can ask them to fork over another \$2 billion?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'm listening carefully and I'm locked in concentration as I listen to the honourable

member. I would say to the honourable member that I think what he's suggesting is really quite out of keeping with the facts as I think most people understand them. The fact of the matter is, programs have to be paid for. Your philosopher king in the United States, Ronald Reagan, simply reduced revenues, raised expenditure dramatically and left his country with an enormous, huge, structural deficit, and we're not advocating that kind of a program—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Is that what your Rhodes scholar friends told you?

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: It may not be the message the member wants to hear, but we are intending to pay for current programs more and more out of current revenues and that has to be the direction that we take. We believe strongly in a good health care system and a good education system, good roads, good highways, good social services, and we believe in paying our bills and we don't believe in putting it off for ever and ever. That's the approach we have to take as a province and that's the approach we have to take as a country.

Those of you over there who preach, "You can have it all and you'll never have to pay any taxes," that is one of the great modern myths of the 20th century and you are the really fiscally irresponsible people leaving future generations with a debt which they will not be able to afford. That's what your legacy will be.

The Speaker: Will the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: That's the legacy of irresponsible Tory philosophy and Tory tax policies. That's the legacy.

Mr Cousens: I can't believe it. I think you had too much time in Washington with the Rhodes scholars and you couldn't find out what the real people were thinking. You're almost assuming that the people who are coming here tomorrow are stupid, as if they're ignorant and they don't understand what it means, and by our asking the question we're stupid and ignorant. We're not. We're concerned; we're angry; we're upset. The tax wall has been hit in the province of Ontario. We've reached the point where you've got to stop taxing the life out of the people of Ontario.

The Liberals raised 33 taxes and they had a great policy: Tax and spend, tax and spend. Well, you're coming along with the same kind of high tax policy and the public are saying: "Stop it. Stop trying to bleed us so that there is no life left in our corpse."

Don't con the people of Ontario into believing that there is too little revenue in the province of Ontario. That's flat-out nonsense. You have the revenue. You've got more money this year than last year. You're spending more money this year than last year. The problem you have is that you as a government are still spending too much.

The Speaker: Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Cousens: When will you stop bankrupting the province of Ontario and the taxpayer?

Hon Mr Rae: John Robarts, year over year, never spent less on programs in a subsequent year than in the previous year. Bill Davis never spent less in one year than he did the year before. Neither did David Peterson. The first government that has done this in 50 years on program spending is the New Democratic Party government of Ontario. If there's one group of individuals who talk out of both sides of their mouth and who preach fiscal responsibility but practise the opposite when they're in office, it's the Tory party of this province, and I think it's time we called their bluff.

Mr Cousens: It's one big shell game and what a sham it is now, because the way the taxes are now being spread out to the local taxpayer, where the province has downloaded so much to them, with only one taxpayer in the province and you're hitting him, the Liberals hit him, and then you've made the regions and municipalities hit him, there's only so much money and you're taking too much.

I started by asking the Premier about the rally tomorrow. When the people make their pilgrimage, you know, in the past—I asked him, expecting he'd be there, but he's probably not even going to come, because most of those cabinet ministers, when there's a rally, they used to run to the head of the parade. Now when the parade comes, you can't even find them. They're not even around. So I challenge the Speaker and ask him, come to that group and explain to them the vicious tax circle.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): You're challenging the Speaker?

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): What's your question?

Mr Cousens: I'm coming to it, honourable friend. I want you to explain how the vicious circle works. You increase taxes, then people have less money to spend. Then prices go up. When prices go up, people spend less, and then when they spend less, business has to cut back because they don't have as much business to generate. Then Ontarians start to lose their jobs. Then the government has to increase the amount of social services to those who lost their jobs, and then taxes go up again.

How do you explain this vicious tax circle to the people who are going to be coming tomorrow, and will you come out tomorrow and talk to them when they come here to Queen's Park?

Hon Mr Rae: When I hear someone from the Conservative Party talk about downloading—you were at the convention on the weekend. I wonder, did you turn to any of your federal friends and say, "Why have you ripped \$4.5 billion out of the guts of the provincial

budget of this province?" Did you do that? Well, I wonder. I wonder, where were you? Where were you, when the federal government has taken \$4.5 billion in transfer payments on the CAP alone? What they've done on the Canada assistance plan has been as bad and serious for Ontario as the national energy program was for the province of Alberta, and look how they quickly they fixed that problem for Alberta. They're ready to respond to other governments. They're not ready to respond to the needs of 10 million people in the province of Ontario. The Tory party's got a lot to answer for when it comes to the state of finances in the province of Ontario, a lot to answer for.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Mississauga West. The member for Markham, a point of order?

Mr Cousens: I want to answer the Premier's question he was asking me on what I was doing in Ottawa—

The Speaker: No, no, no, no, the member for Markham, questions on this side, replies on this side. The member for Mississauga West.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): I was listening. Did the cock just crow three times, did I hear? I wasn't sure.

The Speaker: Does the member for Mississauga West have a question?

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): My question is to the Minister of Labour, the Honourable Bob Mackenzie. I have a bill here. It's Bill 48, An Act to encourage negotiated settlements in the public sector to preserve jobs and services while managing reductions in expenditures and to provide for certain matters related to the Government's expenditure reduction program.

My question to the Honourable Bob Mackenzie, the Minister of Labour, sir, is, do you support this legislation?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): To the opposition critic, I support the legislation.

The Speaker: Supplementary.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Let's try a supplementary.

Mr Mahoney: Some guys will do anything for a limo, I'll tell you.

Mr Speaker, I'd like to you read you some quotes, if I might. I will be brief. October 1, 1992, who said this?

"We don't think this country can go down a low-wage route.... We think there has to be an involvement, in the province of Ontario, with workers as well as business, and that is essential if we're ever going to begin to turn around the kind of economic situation we have."

Guess again, a quote:

"I want you to know that I agree with my Premier's position"—that's a good decision—"I think one of the things that's wrong in this province is that in a very tough economic situation we have not decided that one of the important things we have to do is involve the workers themselves in the decisions that affect them."

July 6, 1992:

"The need for labour and management to work together in a spirit of cooperation, involvement and trust is greater now than at any time in Ontario's history...."

"Finally...we hope to usher in a new era of peace and non-confrontation in labour disputes. We intend to introduce a number of measures to promote the smooth operation"—

The Speaker: And the question?

Mr Mahoney: —"of the collective bargaining process and to offer protection for the jobs of workers involved in labour disputes."

1500

And finally, this quote—

The Speaker: Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Mahoney: —saying that we are "encouraging more participation and cooperation between labour and management, reducing the level of industrial conflict and streamlining the process of collective bargaining."

All those quotes, sir, appears in Hansard, attributed to the Honourable Bob Mackenzie.

How can you consider that this bill in any way whatsoever streamlines the collective bargaining process and involves the workers in issues of concern that directly affect them? Have you not abdicated your responsibilities to the workers of this province?

Interjection.

The Speaker: The question has been placed, and I ask the member for Chatham-Kent to come to order.

Hon Mr Mackenzie: If I thought I were abdicating my responsibilities to working people in the province, I would not remain in this position. I'm in this position and I'm supporting them. I'm supporting this legislation for all the reasons that were outlined by the member across the way. We either are going to involve workers in the decisions that affect them, we are going to protect the economic status of our province, or we're not going to be able to supply and provide the services that we've given workers in this province, and we've got to recognize that very clearly.

The Speaker: New question? The leader of the third party.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The leader of the third party has the floor.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): Thanks very much, Mr Speaker. I have another question for the Premier. Along with the concerns we have about some things missing in your legislation, we have some real concerns about one specific aspect I'd like to raise today, that is, the awesome, unprecedented powers, that have been given to the Finance minister under Bill 48.

Premier, I would ask you this: Given the current level of cynicism about your government's handling of spending your way out of deficits and now this about your handling of the social contract process, and indeed, I say with great sincerity, cynicism about all politicians and about the whole lot of us in general, would you not agree with me, upon second look at the legislation, that it would make more sense to have a neutral third party make the decisions that under your legislation appear to be exclusively left to the Minister of Finance?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I guess the reasoning behind the bill is simply the need to provide for some flexibility in the course of these negotiations. For example, I noticed that there was some criticism today of the fact that the minister was going to be allowed to say, "These are the structures of the sectors." The point is, we've had a long period of negotiation. There's been a substantial consensus reached on all those things. We didn't want to get too bureaucratic and we wanted to allow for an element of flexibility. I think that's the philosophy that's behind the act.

Mr Harris: I agree with you that this is a very unusual bill and circumstance, and I agree with you that you are trying to provide more flexibility than previous governments have brought in: Progressive Conservative here and Liberal in Ottawa, because we've never had a Liberal one here try to actually control spending. I've supported that extra degree of flexibility, that extra discussion. But we can do that without giving all the power to the political appointee, to the Minister of Finance. When former governments brought in legislation that, let's all admit, infringed upon the collective bargaining process to flow in its normal way, it did a couple of things.

Number one, which I've already talked about today, it respected the anniversary date of contracts, which is one of the things I think we have to talk about in your legislation. But secondly, it set up independent bodies to adjudicate, if you like, or to arbitrate, the legislation or those things.

So I would ask you directly, Premier: Given that it's an awesome power never before in any legislation—I appreciate the flexibility you're looking for—will you agree to look at amending Bill 48 to empower an independent third party instead of the minister, to put more impartiality in allowing that flexibility?

Hon Mr Rae: Let me just say in general that of course if you have amendments, we will consider them.

The first part of your questioning today was about the size of the bureaucracy and the need for us to avoid large bureaucracies. It wouldn't be difficult for a government to create a huge bureaucracy to deal with an issue like this.

There's provision there for a process of adjudication with respect to agreements and how they're operated. That's clearly set out, so the minister is not exercising an adjudicative role. The minister is exercising his role and responsibilities as minister. He is fully accountable to the House for the judgements he makes.

BICYCLING POLICY

Mr Robert Frankford (Scarborough East): I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. It's about bicycles, which as he knows are an increasingly popular form of transportation and recreation. I'd like to ask some questions about how he can encourage this.

As he knows, the Rouge Valley Park will likely be a popular spot for cycling, and there is a lot of satisfaction with the development of the Rouge park in my riding. Can the minister indicate how his ministry will be helping to make the roads of Scarborough East safe and accessible for the growing number of cyclists?

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): The member for Scarborough East will be aware that at Transportation, we're spending more than \$3.5 million annually to create new bike routes, bike paths, and we're presently working with the people of Scarborough to create a waterfront trail for cyclists between the communities of Burlington and Trenton.

The member of course is aware that we are dedicated at the Ministry of Transportation to better education. We're spending more money than ever before to inform cyclists, and of course we do support wholeheartedly the safe cycling initiative as well.

Mr Frankford: GO Transit is an important provincial service, with the Guildwood and Rouge Hill stations in my riding. Can the minister tell us what steps will be taken to make the use of GO more effective to cyclists?

Hon Mr Pouliot: A twist of political fate: The timing from my friend and colleague couldn't be any better. I have just received a note, and I'm quoting: "New secure bike racks," brand-new, "at Rouge Hill and Guildwood this summer." I want to thank you for your interest and indeed the focus of the question.

In terms of GO Transit, when we're talking about integration, we will include cyclists and we will make it possible for people to bring their bikes on the GO buses. I thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank my colleague for his interest.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): My question is for the Minister of Education and Training. As might be expected, at a time when there are simply no

jobs for our young people and when it is now universally recognized that education holds the key to our future, more and more young people are deciding to pursue a post-secondary education. Here are some of the numbers: for our colleges, 118,000 students have applied for 70,000 spaces; for our universities, 88,660 students have applied for 45,000 spaces. This means that over 91,000 students will be refused admission to our post-secondary institutions in September. I want to repeat that because it's very important. Over 91,000 students are going to be refused admission into our colleges and universities this September.

Given these numbers, how can you possibly have us believe that you're doing anything other than quietly presiding over the greatest decline in accessibility to our colleges and universities this province has ever witnessed?

1510

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I certainly share the concerns of the member and everybody else that the numbers and the applications to go to community colleges and universities have increased considerably over the last few years and that the infrastructure to deal with those applications has not increased rapidly enough.

The numbers will go up considerably for first-year enrolment this year. As the critic for the Liberal Party will know, with the acceptance of 70,000 for first year, that will be a considerable increase in first-year enrolment at our colleges.

I would agree with the member that we're going to need to do better, to work with the college system to see what additional numbers we can increase in the future. I know there are already a couple of community colleges that have decided to operate and provide year-round education. Instead of slowing down and decreasing the operations of the colleges in the summer, some are moving to year-round education. I think that's appropriate. We need to look at more of that type of action in order to increase accessibility and increase enrolment to the best we can, given our financial constraints.

Mr McGuinty: I hear the minister's expression of concern, but I want to tell him that this government's policies are not only not helping the situation; they're actually making things worse. Let me tell you about the real impact that this government's policies are having on accessibility. When applications are at an all-time high this year, Ontario universities have reduced their spaces by 5.6%. Taken alone, Toronto's two universities have reduced their spaces by 14%. But the worst may be yet to come. People in the colleges and universities sector are telling me that this social contract legislation might reduce spaces even further.

Given that everyone in this Legislature, without exception—I'm very comfortable saying that—agrees

that the key to our future lies in educating and training more and more Ontarians, why are your government's policies keeping over 91,000 students out of our colleges and universities?

Hon Mr Cooke: The member obviously knows that with the huge increase in applications for post-secondary institutions it would be impossible physically to deal with the entire demand. You know that and I know that. It makes a good question, but he knows the practical difficulties.

It's also interesting to note that full-time post-secondary enrolments in colleges increased by 7.3% in 1992-93. Over the period from 1989-90 to 1992-93 college full-time enrolments have risen by 25.2%. The government is doing everything it can, given the financial constraints we all live under, to increase enrolment and, at the same time, do that with very limited increases in dollars.

The member points to a very difficult problem. We're doing the best we can. We want to work with the Council of Regents and all the colleges' boards of directors to do the best we can to increase accessibility in our college and university system.

If the member really were concerned, what should have happened is that when the money was pouring in, in the 1980s, we should have been increasing the infrastructure, adding to the size of our colleges and dealing with some real problems. But you ignored the problem when all the money was pouring in from 1985 to 1990.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Cooke: You know that's the case. Now we're having to deal with another mess that you left us.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): My question is for the Minister of Citizenship. This morning the regulations to accompany Bill 79, the Employment Equity Act, were introduced. Unfortunately, they're being released today at the same time as second reading on this bill begins. It's unfortunate because many people had been led to believe that there would be about a two-week time period between the regulations and the second reading of the bill. Now, unfortunately, there's absolutely no time for people to take a look at the regulations and come forward with their opinions.

However, as I've only had a cursory glance at the legislation, I am very concerned that the regulations deal very differently with organized and unorganized workers. The legislation states that if the workers are unorganized, you consult. If the workers are organized, they are part of the process and they have a membership on the coordinating committee.

In fact, it goes further, to say that in reference to employer, it shall be deemed to be the employer and

bargaining agent that are being referred to. It appears that this is going to be as skewed and as much in favour of unionized employees as was Bill 40.

Mr Minister, if this bill is really about fairness and equity, as you keep saying it is, why is there a double standard and why is the treatment for unorganized and organized workers so very different?

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister of Citizenship and Minister Responsible for Human Rights, Disability Issues, Seniors' Issues and Race Relations): First of all, I'd like to clarify that I'm not a Mr Minister, but I'm a Madam Minister. I just would like to clarify that.

Interjection: It's an employment equity issue.

Hon Ms Ziemba: It is an employment equity issue, it certainly is.

I also want to make just one clarification for you. First of all, the regulations are a very important part of the legislation and we all recognize that. This is one of the very first times that regulations have been released before second reading. The usual way of doing things is that the regulations are done after third reading. I think we've given people a good opportunity to take a look at the regulations, to give us their opinions, and we've given them till October 29 if they want to come in with a formal position. I think this is a very open process and I know that we have spoken together and we want to keep that open process going.

I know there have been several points put on the table today, Mr Speaker, and I did want to clarify this. But I also want to say to the member, we're very pleased about Bill 40 and we want to continue to make sure that we do have a good process in place with employment equity as well, with our friends in the labour movement. It's very important to us, but we also recognize that in unorganized workplaces there has to be a concern to make sure that people are part of the process as well and that we have put that into the regulations.

Mrs Witmer: The minister has totally, totally neglected or chosen to ignore responding to the question I asked, which is, why is the treatment different? I'd like to ask you, Madam Minister, how is the employer to deal with the union and non-unionized employees fairly?

Hon Ms Ziemba: The regulations very clearly put into place a process where both the employer and the employees are part of not only the consultation process but also setting up the equity plans. This is very important because if we are going to have legislation that works and if we're going to have regulations that work and are effective, we have to make sure that not only the employer but the employee are part of the process to make sure that this is really done in a fair way and that there's no resentment built up on either side, and I think the regulations very clearly spell that out.

These are draft regulations and there's plenty of opportunity before the final setup of the commission to have input to further strengthen those regulations, to further make sure that refinements are made to make this the best and most practical, workable and effective piece of regulations that we can have in the province of Ontario.

HERITAGE LEGISLATION

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): My question is to the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation. The Ontario Heritage Act requires municipalities to publish a notice in local newspapers on six occasions announcing the designation of heritage property.

However, in my riding, East York has the distinction of being the only borough in Canada, and it does not have a local paper serving its community. The Ontario Heritage Act does not recognize a borough as a municipality. Will East York be required to advertise in the larger municipality of Metro Toronto? This would be a costly procedure for a community with a population of only 101,000.

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I want to thank the member for raising this matter with me on behalf of the people who are working to preserve heritage sites in East York, and I know that the member himself has been in fact very active in helping to lead the protection of that community's history and heritage.

The member's absolutely correct that the Ontario Heritage Act, as it now reads, leaves East York in a difficult situation and in fact there are other communities throughout Ontario who have raised the same kinds of concerns.

The notice provision is in fact costly and outdated in its implications to municipalities. It's something that the ministry's advisory committee on heritage recommendations has made a recommendation to me to have changed.

Our new legislation is now being drafted. I'm very hopeful that when we are able to introduce it in the House, we'll be able to get the support of all parties to remedy the kinds of problems that the member for York East has pointed out. I'm sorry that I can't immediately solve his problem, but I am hopeful that in the not-too-distant future new heritage legislation will be able to do so.

1520

INVESTMENT IN ONTARIO

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. The minister will know that we in Ontario are in a competitive situation for investment, and I think that the minister will acknowledge that any recovery we're going to have is going to be an investment-led recovery. The minister will remember that last week I questioned

the Minister of Finance as to the corporate minimum tax, and now I'd like to ask the minister her opinion as to what the impact of this Bill 48 is going to be.

We know that there are unsettled financial markets. The financial markets are waiting to see whether or not this government can in fact implement this bill. We also know that one of the great competitive advantages that we in Ontario have is our quality of life and our labour stability.

I'd like to quote from a statement made by Mr Barry Weisleder, president of Local 595 of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, in which he says:

"Do the 10 million or 11 million residents of Ontario use hospitals? Do they seek education for themselves, for their children? Do they need to use the roads? All of these services are delivered by public service workers and I can only surmise that all of those services are at risk."

We also have a situation where the Minister of Health has made a statement, and again one of our strong, competitive advantages has been the fact that we have a great health care system which is in peril.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Kwinter: The question that I have for the minister is this: Do you not feel that this legislation is going to impair our competitive advantage and, more importantly and more personally, as a former negotiator for OPSEU and the minister responsible for attracting investment to this province, are you personally going to be supporting Bill 48?

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I've had the occasion over the last number of weeks to meet on numerous occasions with representatives of the business community with respect to the issue of confidence in Ontario: with respect to attracting investments, with respect to increasing in fact what is already an export-led recovery of our economic situation and also with respect to consumer confidence, a number of issues that are of concern of course to the government and to all Ontarians.

During the course of those discussions, we've had very specific discussions around government fiscal policy and the importance of government addressing the issue of the debt and deficit. There has been tremendous support expressed by those individual business leaders I've spoken to for a direction of ongoing debt reduction, deficit reduction, and understanding the importance of that to capital markets and to the competitiveness of our province.

Combined and within that are issues like Ontario Hydro rates, which are being addressed by restructuring of Ontario Hydro, health care costs, which of course is an important cost driver overall within government. I think that all of these issues with respect to the ability

of the government to achieve its fiscal directions are critically important to the competitiveness of Ontario and to building our economy. It's one of the reasons why the government has taken a very strong stand with respect to our fiscal directions.

Bill 48 is an important part of achieving the goals that have been set out by the Treasurer in the budget, and I will be supporting the bill when it comes to a vote.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I want to refer to the standing orders, section 23(j), which indicates that the Speaker may call a member to order if that member has charged another member with uttering a deliberate falsehood. I am looking for a place in the standing orders, and cannot find one, that would require the Speaker or the House to direct a member to correct the record when issues have been presented that aren't correct, although there may be a situation in the one that I'm going to relate to you where the Minister of Health indeed does not have full factual detail with respect to an issue.

On several occasions recently, the Minister of Health has indicated to the House that negotiations with medical practitioners are proceeding and that the content—Mr Speaker, this is very important and please do not call me to order until I've completed my point—of those negotiations includes such issues as physician resources, determining appropriate medical services and other methods that will ensure that people receive services that will contribute to better health care.

The minister said today that as we speak those issues were on the table in negotiation. Mr Speaker, that is not true. Those issues are not on the table, and the—

The Speaker: Sorry, would the member please take her seat. The member knows that she does not have a point of order. There is nothing in the standing orders which addresses the situation that she raises. Members may rise to correct their own record indeed.

What the member has brought to my attention is a dispute between herself and the Minister of Health, a difference of opinion, and often we find those differences on the floor of the House during oral questions. Indeed, I think the matter to which she referred was part of the subject matter which she addressed earlier today. I'm afraid that there is nothing in the standing orders which will be of assistance to her.

Mrs Sullivan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In view of your response then, I would like to ask for the consent of the House to ask the minister, after consultation with her officials, to bring a report to the House tomorrow that accurately reflects what in fact is on the negotiating table which does not include the pieces of information that she provided to the House today and on

previous days. The information that she has brought to the House is not true.

The Speaker: The member in fact is asking for unanimous consent for a minister to make a statement. Is there unanimous consent for the minister to make a statement? No, there isn't. The member for Parry Sound.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): Mr Speaker, I just wanted to add one more point to the point of order I made briefly, because I know you're going to be considering it shortly.

The only other point I wish to make, other than the fact that the orders of the day, the business sheet, says that the deferred vote on Bill 38 is indeed the first order and that committee of the whole House on Bill 96 is the second order, which of course would be in contravention of the time allocation motion, in that if indeed, I would submit to you, a vote is regarded as an order of the day, and the first order of the day in this case, if it's so done—I want to make it clear that I'm not saying the government did this—but a government could in the future deliberately have its whip defer a vote to eat into time set aside or allocated by a time allocation motion. I don't think—in fact, I know that is not what was intended by the three parties when the rules were negotiated in the first place.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): On the same point, the member for Mississauga West.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): I would defer to the government House leader if he wants to respond to that point.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Mr Speaker, I've already passed a few comments to you. There are a couple of additional comments I'd like to make on this particular point as well.

First of all, let me reiterate what I've already said, which is that the matter which the member has raised is a procedural matter. It is a procedural technique in the rules that was agreed to by the three House leaders and ultimately passed by this House in order to safeguard all parties in certain circumstances around the taking of votes.

The deferred vote is not, as has been suggested by some, a called order. It's an automatic order of the House because of the nature of the standing orders and because of the nature of its existence as a procedural mechanism, which, as I repeat, was designed to protect all three of the parties in the House and, for that matter, any other party that might at some point exist here. It could be any one of the whips of any one of the three parties who moves that deferral motion.

In any event, that kind of deferral cannot be seen as a called government order, and in that respect I'd just

like you to think that through very carefully in your consideration of this.

1530

Mr Mahoney: I appreciate the fact that the government House leader is saying that under the rules any one of the three party whips could have asked for the vote deferral. However, that was not indeed what happened: It was the government that ordered the business.

My concern is very much along the same lines as the member for Parry Sound in that the government is continually telling us, as it did yesterday in the debate—I've lost track of time on debates so much, maybe it was the day before, but in the late-night sitting debate in which the government House leader refers to the rules and the traditions.

We have seen, I know you would agree—in fact, this week alone I've raised two points of order based on the rules in this book and in both cases you have confirmed that indeed my points of order were valid, but there appears to be no remedy to these things. You simply say, "The member has a point of order and let's carry on with the debate" or "with the business."

If the government House leader is truly interested and concerned about following the rules and procedures outlined in the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly instead of selectively interpreting them to suit his own legislative agenda's purpose, or selectively saying that it could have been one of the opposition whips who submitted the request for a deferral of the vote, then I'd suggest, with due respect to you and to him, that the government House leader is being much too selective about interpreting these rules.

I believe the member for Parry Sound has raised a point of order. We did not draft the time allocation motion; the government drafted it. It clearly says the first order of business on that particular sessional day. It doesn't say that maybe you can have a vote thrown in, in front of it.

I believe the point of order is valid. Mr Speaker, I'd like your ruling, and I'd particularly like you to tell us what the remedy for this is.

The Speaker: To the member for Mississauga West, I trust he recalls that I said I would have a ruling for you before we reached orders of the day, and I intend to do that. I appreciate the contribution he has made, as well as the member for Parry Sound, the House leader for the third party and the government House leader.

I must say that in reaching a decision, it has to be around a matter of procedure and not a consideration of good intentions. I will do my best to come back as quickly as possible.

I believe the Deputy Speaker is prepared to carry on. We are at an order of routine proceedings, the presentation of petitions.

Mr Mahoney: Before petitions, I have a very brief point of order. Mr Speaker, I've looked in here, and it must be here somewhere, for the ruling that would guide you in instructing the government how to react to this, but I've just received a communication that MCTV television studios in Sudbury conducted a poll on whether or not the Premier should resign and 85% of the callers said he should.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Order.

PETITIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

That's signed by 52 signatures and I've also affixed my signature to this petition.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the committee on the status of endangered wildlife in Canada, compiled of scientists and government representatives, added seven species to their list, making a total of 236 plant and animal species endangered; and

"Whereas the above-noted further additions will make it difficult for Canada to meet its obligations as outlined in the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity;

"Whereas as a result of the fact that Canadian spaces and species do not receive any lawful mandatory protection, we will quickly lose our beautiful, natural wildlife, upon which we place much pride;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ontario government declare a moratorium to protect all species and their habitat that are placed on the Canadian endangered list."

This petition is signed by 299 students at the Zion Heights school—

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): Have you affixed your signature?

Mr Harnick: —and I have affixed my signature at the top.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I have a petition here signed by many hundreds of residents in my riding. They're very concerned about the legislation, the OMPP, which has eliminated the right of innocent accident victims to sue for economic loss. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the OMPP" fails to deliver cost-effective—oh, excuse me—"currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits;" no, it must be a mistake here.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario."

CONTRAT SOCIAL

M. Jean Poirier (Prescott et Russell): J'ai une pétition adressée à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

«Attendu que nous sommes en désaccord avec la façon de procéder de Monsieur Rae face à la coalition ;

«Nous, soussignés, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante», une pétition ou une protestation justement du contrat social.

C'est commandé par M^{me} Nicole St-Jean de l'AEFO de la section catholique de Prescott et Russell à Casselman. J'ai apposé ma signature et j'appuie à 100 % cette pétition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Mr Speaker, 266 constituents from my riding of Oakville South and the surrounding area have asked me to table a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to withdraw Bill 164."

GAMBLING

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Mr Speaker, as you know, the rules of this House will not allow a member of cabinet to read a petition, so I'm reading this petition on behalf of the member for Frontenac-Adding-

ton, Fred Wilson:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): On behalf of Mr Doug MacDonald, a good citizen of Mississauga, I'd like to present a petition of 150 names he managed to collect:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I have affixed my signature thereto.

1540

ONTARIO FILM REVIEW BOARD

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the

Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the Ontario Film Review Board at its May 6, 1993, policy committee meeting decided to loosen the guidelines for films and videos for Ontario; and

"Whereas the loosening will result in permitting some very gross and indecent acts in films and videos; and

"Whereas these acts include bondage, ejaculation on the face and insertion of foreign objects; and

"Whereas the aforementioned acts are not in any way part of true human sexual activity but rather belong in textbooks for case studies of deviants; and

"Whereas these activities not only violate community standards but parts of the Canadian Criminal Code;

"We, the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the Ontario Legislature to:

"(a) Cancel the new policy resolution of the Ontario Film Review Board, May 6, 1993, on adult sex films and videos;

"(b) Ask the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, the Honourable Marilyn Churley, to review the criteria for appointments of members to the Ontario Film Review Board; and

"(c) Ensure that prospective appointees reflect traditional and moral values of the people of Ontario."

I'm happy to add my support to this petition.

GAMBLING

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, from 94 of the citizens of Niagara Falls, which petitions the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, "That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

MADAWASKA HIGHLANDS

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I'm pleased to submit a petition prepared and signed by Reeve Gilbert Welk and others in and around the township of Brudenell, all of which signatories are singularly unhappy with the Ministry of Natural Resources plans with respect to further controls on the Madawaska Highlands area in Renfrew county.

GAMBLING

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated

with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activities invariably attract criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than ever before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish casino gambling in Ontario."

That is from the Reverend Hunt at St Paul's United Church, on Rebecca Street in Oakville, Ontario.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I have a petition here signed by many hardworking people from my riding, people like Dianne Johnson, Josie Guignard, Richard Davidson, Gene and Josephine Stozelecki. They petition us, sir, that:

"Whereas we feel that the Canada-US free-trade deal has done more immeasurable damage to the economy of the province of Ontario, causing the loss of more than 45,000 jobs in Ontario alone; and

"Whereas we feel the proposed North American free trade agreement will have an even more devastating effect on Ontario, resulting in a loss of not only more jobs but also in a reduction in our environmental standards, our labour standards, our workers' rights, the quality of our social life and our overall quality of life;

"We petition the Legislature of Ontario in Toronto to fight this trade deal with whatever means is possible and we petition the House of Commons in Ottawa to stop this deal now."

CLOSURE OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): The saga continues. I have another petition continuing with the petition that I've been bringing on a daily basis, another 440 names addressing Premier Rae, Treasurer Laughren and Minister Buchanan.

"We, the undersigned, request that you seriously consider reversing your decision to close the New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology."

I'll affix my signature to this too.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and Grenville, members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 439, employed at the Sherwood Park Manor in Brockville, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just,

protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: Free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I've affixed my signature in support.

GAMBLING

Mr Robert Frankford (Scarborough East): I have a petition originating from the Centennial Rouge United Church in the Highland Creek area of my riding expressing opposition to gambling and calling on the government of Ontario to cease all moves to establish gambling casinos.

ABORTION

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition signed by more than 200 parishioners of St Theresa's parish in Cornwall who believe that the task force of abortion service providers is clearly opposed to social justice. The petition states that, "Human life begins at conception," and that "Abortion knowingly and willingly puts an end to human life."

I support this petition and have affixed my signature to it.

GAMBLING

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted with the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

That's signed by a number of my constituents and by me.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly and the

Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I have over 100 signatures and I have affixed mine.

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

That is signed by a couple of hundred of my constituents and by me.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I have a ruling with respect to the point of order raised by the honourable member for Parry Sound.

The vote was deferred last night to immediately following routine proceedings Wednesday, June 16, 1993. Standing order 28(g) refers to a vote being deferred to a specified time, no later than 6 pm on the next sessional day. The Speaker calls the items on the order paper in the order in which they appear and, therefore, following the introduction of bills, it is my duty to call orders of the day.

If it was a deferred vote by another party, it would still be entered under government business if it dealt with a government bill.

The deferred vote appears as order number 22 in today's order paper. It's my opinion that it is an order of the day and that because last night's deferral order refers to "immediately following routine proceedings," the first order of business today has to be government order number 22. Therefore, because the allocation of time order passed by this House last week refers to Bill

96 being called as the first order of business, I must find that the House cannot proceed with Bill 96 today according to the terms of the allocation of time motion.

I noted the comment earlier that what has occurred was not anyone's intention. Members will know that by unanimous consent they could proceed, if they so wish, with Bill 96. That's where it rests.

1550

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mr Huget from the standing committee on resources development presented the committee's report under standing order 108 on bicycle helmets and moved its adoption.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): No, Mr Speaker. I move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Ms Haeck from the standing committee on regulations and private bills presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill Pr88, An Act respecting the Cruickshank Elderly Persons Centre

Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendments:

Bill Pr5, An Act respecting the Korean Canadian Cultural Association

Bill Pr14, An Act respecting the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation

Bill Pr17, An Act to revive Aga Ming Property Owners Association

Bill Pr37, An Act to revive P.O.I.N.T. Incorporated

Bill Pr74, An Act respecting the City of North York.

Your committee recommends that the fees, and the actual costs of printing, be remitted on Bill Pr5, An Act respecting the Korean Canadian Cultural Association.

Your committee recommends that the fees, and the actual cost of printing, be remitted on Bill Pr14, An Act respecting the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation.

Your committee recommends that the fees, and the actual cost of printing, be remitted on Bill Pr37, An Act to revive P.O.I.N.T. Incorporated.

Your committee recommends that the fees, and the actual cost of printing, be remitted on Bill Pr88, An Act respecting the Cruickshank Elderly Persons Centre.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Mrs Marland from the standing committee on government agencies presented the committee's fifth report.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): No, thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 106(g)(11), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Kormos, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 52, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act.

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold): This bill amends the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act by providing that members retiring on or after January 1, 1993, would not be entitled to be paid their pensions until they attain the age of 60. If a member dies on or after the day on which the bill becomes law and leaves a surviving spouse, the spouse would not be entitled to be paid survivor pension benefits until the day on which the member would have attained the age of 60 had he or she lived. However, if such a member leaves a surviving child or children but no spouse, the children would still be entitled to an immediate survivor benefit.

HELLENIC ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF KINGSTON AND DISTRICT ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Gary Wilson, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr42, An Act to revive Hellenic Orthodox Community of Kingston.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

RETAIL BUSINESS HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT ACT (SUNDAY SHOPPING), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES JOURS FÉRIÉS DANS LE COMMERCE DE DÉTAIL (OUVERTURE DES COMMERCE LE DIMANCHE)

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail en ce qui concerne l'ouverture des commerces le dimanche.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Mr Speaker, just before you proceed with the order, having listened to the two opposition leaders very carefully today, I would like to seek unanimous consent to hold the deferred vote from last evening; then to

move to the 36th order, which is the second reading of Bill 79, to hear the remarks of the Minister of Citizenship for about 35 minutes; then, as the three parties had agreed, to have the official opposition adjourn the debate on that bill and to move to the 27th order, second reading of Bill 48, as has been suggested by the two opposition leaders, and that we debate that bill from that point until 11:50 tonight, at which time we would proceed to vote on second reading of Bill 48.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): The smugness over there is quite interesting. We're more than delighted to begin the debate on that bill. If the House leader would like to listen—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): You're so screwed up.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. The member for Etobicoke West will come to order.

Mr Stockwell: You asked for this.

The Speaker: I ask the member for Etobicoke West to come to order immediately.

Mr Mahoney: Let me be clear—this is called ordering the business of the House by the seat of your pants—we are quite prepared to begin the debate. We are not prepared to agree to closure, which is in essence what the House leader is attempting to do. We will have a proper parliamentary debate. We will go by the rules for once around this place. We'll go by the rules and we'll vote on that bill when it's appropriate, after we've had a chance—the Premier himself said he would consider amendments and changes to that legislation. This is nothing more than thuggery on the part of this government.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Mississauga West was given an opportunity to put his points to the Chair, and I listened carefully. The member for Parry Sound now has the same opportunity.

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): On the point made by the government House leader, that's a cute little political trick, but the reality is that on a piece of legislation that is probably the most significant this government has introduced to date, they're asking the opposition parties to close off debate at 11:50 this evening. Is that what I'm hearing over there? I would have thought that on this important piece of legislation, the government would want to give the public and other members in this place several days of debate until 12 am.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order. The member for York Centre is asked to come to order. The member for York Centre knows better. I would ask the member to temper his language.

The government House leader asked for unanimous

consent for a number of items. Do we have unanimous consent? It's not necessary to rise.

No. The question was asked and there was at least one negative voice.

Interjections.

The Speaker: This is not a complicated matter. The government House leader asked a question for unanimous consent. I placed that and I heard one negative voice. So there is not unanimous consent.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): On a point of order, Mr Speaker, to put forward a clarification of what in fact the government House leader put before this House without any prior notice whatsoever: The government House leader—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Right now we're not conducting any business. I would ask all members to come to order.

Mrs McLeod: The government House leader did not ask for unanimous consent to bring forward the legislation and have it debated according to the due procedures of this House. This is a government which has brought forward the most draconian measures ever seen in this House to be able to ram through the most unpopular pieces of legislation with very limited debate by members of the opposition. If this government thinks we will ever, ever—

The Speaker: Would the leader take her seat, please. What we do have is an order of the House which says—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

We have an order of the House which is a deferred vote on Bill 38. There is a five-minute bell. Call in the members.

The division bells rang from 1603 to 1608.

The Speaker: This is a deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping, moved by Mr Christopherson.

Those in favour of the bill will please rise one by one.

Ayes

Allen, Boyd, Buchanan, Caplan, Carr, Charlton, Christopherson, Churley, Conway, Cooke, Cooper, Coppen, Cousens, Curling, Dadamo, Duignan, Eves, Farnan, Fletcher, Gigantes, Grier, Harnick, Harrington, Harris, Hope, Huget, Jamison, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kwinter, Lankin, Laughren, Lessard, Mackenzie, MacKinnon;

Mahoney, Malkowski, Martel, Mathysen, McGuinty, McLeod, Mills, Morrow, Murdock (Sudbury), North,

Offer, Owens, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Pilkey, Poirier, Poole, Pouliot, Rae, Ramsay, Silipo, Sorbara, Sterling, Stockwell, Sullivan, Swarbrick, Villeneuve, Ward, Wark-Martyn, White, Wildman, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wood, Ziemba.

The Speaker: All those opposed to the bill will please rise one by one.

Nays

Arnott, Bradley, Brown, Callahan, Carter, Cleary, Cordiano, Cunningham, Daigeler, Drainville, Eddy, Grandmaître, Hayes, Henderson, Jackson, Kormos, Marchese, Mammoliti, O'Neil (Quinte), Perruzza, Rizzo, Sola, Tilson, Wilson (Simcoe West), Wiseman, Witmer.

The Speaker: The ayes being 72 and the nays 26, I declare the motion carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Agreed.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ EN MATIÈRE D'EMPLOI

Ms Ziemba moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 79, An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women / Loi prévoyant l'équité en matière d'emploi pour les autochtones, les personnes handicapées, les membres des minorités raciales et les femmes.

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister of Citizenship and Minister Responsible for Human Rights, Disability Issues, Seniors' Issues and Race Relations): As we begin second reading of Bill 79, the Employment Equity Act, I would like to tell the House from the outset that this government remains unwavering in its commitment to this pioneering legislation. Bill 79, when it is enacted, will be critical in addressing employment discrimination faced by aboriginal people, people with disabilities, racial minorities and women, but in so doing it will also improve the working life of all employees.

Let me also say that I'm very proud indeed to be a member of the first provincial government in Canada to bring forward employment equity legislation. It will be the most progressive of its kind in North America, in fact in a lot of the world.

Perhaps even more important, however, is the fact that we are committed to legislation that is effective and workable. It will achieve the desired results in a practical and efficient manner. This is a testament to the comprehensive consultation process we have conducted before and since I introduced the bill in the House almost a year ago.

Since that time, we have had the opportunity to consult on the legislation and the draft regulation with hundreds of people, including designated groups,

employers and organized labour. The enormous amount of work that has been accomplished by the Employment Equity Commissioner, Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré, has been of inestimable value to us and I'd like to recognize the first Employment Equity Commissioner of Ontario.

Applause.

Hon Ms Ziemba: Thank you very much, commissioner. The commissioner's two technical regulation committees and my technical advisory group have also provided us with invaluable input. Many of these same people also made a significant contribution to the development of the draft regulation which, as promised, has now been released. We have consulted on it with more than 50 employers and we have conducted onsite testing of it with employers and bargaining agents. I want to take this opportunity to thank all who have consulted with us for their participation to date. I look forward to continuing the consultation process as we move through the next stages in the bill's development.

As I've talked to people across the province in the past year, it has become clear that there is considerable concern about the discrimination so many people have suffered for so long, and there's recognition that something must be done. As the Ontario Federation of Labour has said, "We cannot continue to ignore these injustices and must act now to correct these historical wrongs."

People who support the thrust of Bill 79 understand that equity is not just a basic tenet of democratic society. They are pragmatists. They know that when people are treated fairly, they are active and productive members of society and that we all reap the rewards.

In my remarks today I want to focus on three key issues: why employment equity is essential, how it will work and what it will achieve. But first I want to explain what employment equity is really about.

Employment equity is designed to bring fairness into the workplace. It is designed to ensure that people are not denied opportunities and advancement in employment for reasons that have nothing to do with their ability. It gives people an equal chance to participate in the workforce and to achieve their potential. If employment equity is about anything, it's about people.

I should say at this point that some people question why we are proceeding with Bill 79 in these difficult times. I cannot emphasize strongly enough how much I believe this is exactly the right time. Employment equity is at the heart of the government's economic renewal agenda. It is an essential component of our strategy to secure future prosperity in Ontario. Let me explain why.

Current economic conditions have forced organizations, institutions and governments worldwide to undertake a serious re-evaluation of their operations, to restructure and to begin to build more solid economic

foundations. One of the key components of organizational change is an analysis of external and internal forces and what impact they have now and will have in the future.

In Ontario one of the external forces that has changed dramatically over the past decade is the demographic picture of our population. For example, it is estimated that in just 10 years' time more than 80% of new entrants to the workforce will come from the four employment equity designated groups—in just 10 years' time.

1620

The potential impact of this significant shift in demographics cannot be ignored. We have to ask ourselves whether we understand what it will mean to research and development, product planning, the services we will need or advertising campaigns. Particularly important, we must ask whether we are ready to maximize the potential of the entire workforce to use its experience and knowledge to the full. We must have answers to these kinds of questions if our organizations and our economy are to flourish.

We surely all agree that now more than ever before we have to make the best of all our human resources. We literally cannot afford to underutilize the training, skills, talent and experience of those who work and those who want to work, particularly if we want to gain a competitive edge in a global economy. To do so is not only unjust; it would be economically disastrous.

Not very long ago job advertisements in newspapers were segregated into "Jobs Wanted—Male" and "Jobs Wanted—Female." This was a simple but effective way of discriminating against a large segment of the population, in fact I might say the majority of our population. Many overt methods of employment discrimination have disappeared. Less blatant but equally damaging discrimination, what is known as systemic discrimination, has not.

How do we know that discriminatory employment practices still exist? Let me share a few facts and figures with you. Year after year, study after study has shown that the four designated groups continue to face persistent employment discrimination. Those who do get hired are frequently frozen in low-level jobs at low pay. They tend to be clustered in a small number of occupational groups. For the sake of brevity, I'll give you a few examples of what I'm talking about, but there are many, many more available.

Aboriginal people have an unemployment rate more than twice that of other workers.

People with disabilities have the same rate of unemployment, but half of them are not even included in labour force statistics, because they are disenchanted by past experience and have given up looking for work.

Racial minorities experience higher rates of unem-

ployment, are less likely to find work in their chosen fields and, despite high levels of education, still earn less than their white counterparts.

While there are more women in the labour force than ever before, they still remain concentrated in a very small percentage of occupational groups and in traditional areas such as teaching, health and social services, and clerical work. The average full-time wage for a woman is still less than 68% of that earned by a man.

These figures are very telling, but they mask the fact that behind the statistics stand real people whose lives, hopes and dreams are affected by them. Throughout the consultation process we have heard many, many haunting stories about the devastating impact that discrimination has. If there's still anyone in this House who doubts that employment discrimination still exists, I urge you to go out in the community and ask members of a designated group if they have ever faced discrimination, either intentional or unintentional, and how it has felt.

You'll meet people like the aboriginal woman who said that as a child she got "iron in her blood" from following behind her father, an iron worker, as he worked. It became her ambition to keep following his steps in a career, but it was a fight every step of the way. She faced the double disadvantage of being a woman and an aboriginal person.

You'll discover how the life of a disabled person can be transformed by a simple purchase, an inexpensive software device which allows a one-handed person to access a full computer keyboard and to work at a fully functional speed.

You'll hear how racial minorities have been told on the telephone that their qualifications are just what the employer is looking for but how these qualifications suddenly seem irrelevant when the person turns up for an interview.

Or you might meet a gutsy woman who is now a top-ranking sales manager. She was once told, because of her consistently high-quality work in the office, "Gee, if only you were a man, we'd give you a briefcase and put you in sales." She got her first sales job 15 years later.

The painfully slow advances that women have made in the workplace, in spite of nearly two decades of affirmative action and employment equity programs, have convinced this government that voluntary employment equity just does not work.

In spite of good intentions, voluntary attempts to meet the challenge of an increasingly diverse population have had only limited success. They have not changed the pattern of unemployment and underemployment that follows designated groups, particularly those persons who are doubly disadvantaged because they are members of more than one group.

This does not diminish the efforts that business, trade unions and equity-seeking groups have been making to implement employment equity. On the contrary, we should recognize and applaud the organizations that have been working on equity issues, for example, General Motors and the Canadian Auto Workers, National Grocers and the United Food and Commercial Workers, Ontario Hydro and CUPE, Royal Insurance, the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario, the Alliance for Employment Equity, the Ontario Coalition of Visible Minority Women and Disabled People for Employment Equity, to name just a few.

Our conviction that employment equity has to be mandatory is simply a realization that while some progressive organizations understand the importance of employment equity, there are still many that do not. The lives of thousands of people cannot be put on hold until everyone catches on and catches up.

Employment equity isn't a new concept. The first affirmative action step of which we are aware was taken in 1941 when US President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order ordering defence plants to show that they are opening jobs to black workers.

The term "employment equity" was first coined by Judge Rosalie Abella during her term as sole commissioner on the royal commission on equality in employment. There has been a federal employment equity act since 1986, and provincially regulated companies in Ontario that have contracts with the federal government fall under a contract compliance program. So there is a considerable body of knowledge about employment equity that we can learn from, work with and improve upon.

The organizations that have been working on employment equity for some time have recognized that the province's demographics have changed significantly in the last decade. As a consequence, so too has the composition of the labour force, the pool of people who are working or looking for work. It has therefore become critical for employers to evaluate their hiring, training and promotion practices to ensure that they are recruiting from the widest available pool of qualified people.

If unintentional discriminatory employment practices screen out certain groups of people, then employers are not benefiting from the biggest available pool and a tremendous amount of potential is being wasted. Some employers have recognized the benefits to be gained by addressing systemic discrimination and that is why they have been working on employment equity programs. They have already accepted that employment equity makes good business sense. They would not have invested time and resources in it if it did not.

I said earlier that I would outline how employment equity will work. The key elements of Bill 79 are that

it requires all workplace barriers that discriminate against designated groups to be removed and it requires employers to implement qualitative and quantitative measures for hiring, retaining and promoting designated group members in order to achieve the long-term goal of workplaces that are representative of the community.

The legislation applies to all of the Ontario public service, to broader public sector employers like school boards, hospitals and other agencies with more than 10 employees and to private sector firms that have more than 50 employees. There are modified requirements for smaller employers, that is, those in the private sector with 50 to 99 employees and those in the broader public sector with 10 to 49 employees.

Once the legislation is passed, employers will have from a year to three years to develop their first employment equity plan, depending on their size and to which sector they belong. Employers and their bargaining agents will take three steps to implement employment equity:

In the first step, they will conduct a workforce survey to identify how many workers are members of designated groups and in which occupations they work.

In the second step an employment systems review will be conducted to see what policies and practices need to be implemented or changed to remove barriers to the full hiring, retention and promotion of designated groups.

In the third step they will set goals and timetables for hiring and promoting designated groups and will establish measures to eliminate employment barriers to achieve a more representative workforce.

Certain aspects of Ontario's legislation make it unique in North America. In our bill, for example, both employers and labour unions have been assigned joint responsibility for employment equity.

1630

In unionized workplaces, employers and bargaining agents will work in partnership on the workforce survey, the employment systems review and plan development, and will together be responsible for reviewing their progress and revising their plans. In non-unionized workplaces, employers must consult with their employees on employment equity implementation.

A further important provision in the bill ensures that designated group members are consulted and play an integral role in employment equity. In workplaces where there are no designated group members, employers and bargaining agents will be required to contact the Employment Equity Commission for information, advice and possible referral to representatives of such groups so that their needs and concerns can be addressed in the employment equity plan.

These unique provisions in the legislation enshrine such workplace partnerships in law, thus making the bill

stronger and ultimately more effective. We have striven hard to attain strong, effective legislation which is workable and recognizes the realities of different workplaces.

One of the key components of Bill 79 is that it gives employers, in partnership with employees, the flexibility to establish and manage their own employment equity plan. This includes setting goals and timetables based on intimate knowledge of their particular organizations and communities.

Employers and designated groups share the view that the focus must be on achieving results rather than on unduly onerous and costly paperwork requirements. That is why the bill will only require employers to submit copies of their employment equity reports if requested by the Employment Equity Commission. Instead, employers will submit a certificate stating that they have done everything required under the act and the regulation, and will provide the basic data necessary for the monitoring of progress.

We are committed to working with the federal government towards coordinating federal and provincial employment equity programs. Staff from both governments are working to ensure that employers covered by the federal contract compliance program will spend their efforts on achieving equity, not on reporting to two levels of government. We intend, for example, to avoid duplication in recordkeeping, reporting and audit requirements.

Throughout the process of developing Bill 79 and the draft regulation that we released today, we have kept uppermost in our minds that we wanted a legislative package that achieved the desired goal: a workforce that is representative of the community. We wanted to enable employers to implement the legislation in a manner that is workable and possible.

We have listened very carefully to the opinions of all the individuals and groups we have consulted with, we have considered what impact their suggestions will have on what we want to achieve and we have made every effort to develop an approach that is effective, balanced, reasonable and fair.

One of the questions I'm most often asked when I talk to people about employment equity is, "What will be achieved with this legislation and what will the benefits be?" The answer is simple: fairness.

Canadians have always prided themselves on being a just people. To admit that we still have employment policies and practices that discriminate against people is to acknowledge a serious failing; understandably, something no one wants to do. But until we come to terms with the fact that we do discriminate against certain groups of people, we will never get to the bottom of this problem.

Employment equity recognizes that discrimination does exist, even though it may be unintentional, and

addresses it head on.

When companies identify discriminatory workplace practices and policies and remove them, everyone in the workplace benefits. For example, when companies have outdated and unnecessary height and weight restrictions attached to certain jobs, a lot of people are screened out of the application process, no matter what other pertinent qualifications they may have.

When organizations implement measures to accommodate persons with disabilities, other employees find that such measures assist them too. For example, employers who have installed ramps for employees who use wheelchairs have often found that they have been welcomed by other employees who use trolleys and by customers and clients as well.

Qualitative workforce policies that might have originally been implemented to address the needs of working women often result in benefits for every other employee. For example, flex-time can help parents attend to child care duties, but single people can use that flexibility in working hours as well.

If a company changes its recruitment policy so that hiring is no longer done purely by word of mouth, but involves broader outreach, a large number of people benefit. They're made aware of opportunities they would otherwise never know about.

Employment equity also improves employers' ability to recruit the best-qualified people for the job. A number of factors are taken into consideration when an employer makes a decision about who gets hired, but some have nothing to do with requirements of the job.

When employers follow the principles of employment equity, they focus on skills and abilities and consequently they are able to choose qualified people from a larger labour pool. Let me be very clear about this: Employment equity is not about hiring unqualified people. It just ensures that all Ontarians with the qualifications for a job are given the same opportunity as everyone else.

Employment equity improves employers' workplace policies and practices and assists with human resource planning exercises, which in turn keep organizations abreast of change. Designated group members gain specific benefits from particular measures that overcome disadvantage. This is recognized in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in Ontario's Human Rights Code.

Over and above the more concrete benefits that I have outlined, of course, are those that are less tangible but equally important. They are the benefits that will specifically accrue to the designated groups in which we, once again, will all share. They include pride, respect, recognition and hope.

The Alliance for Employment Equity expressed this sentiment most succinctly when it said, and I want to quote:

"In terms of dignity and self-worth, the value to designated group members of being able to work at levels commensurate with one's abilities is immeasurable."

The cooperation with stakeholders that has achieved what we have to date must continue as we go through the next stages in the bill's development.

Following second reading, Bill 79 will be discussed during legislative committee hearings. We will be conducting a separate but concurrent consultation process on the draft regulation, which will include further testing with employers and bargaining agents and designated groups.

Once Bill 79 becomes law, each workplace partner must accept the responsibility for making employment equity work. On the government's part, we are determined that assistance will be given to the partners—employers, bargaining agents, employees and designated groups—as employment equity becomes a reality around the province.

We'll be establishing the Employment Equity Commission. It will be an arm's-length agency which will act as a facilitator and information provider, and will provide data from Statistics Canada on designated and occupational groups to assist the employment equity partners with the goal-setting process.

The commission will also monitor and audit employment equity progress in the province to ensure that we achieve our goal of a workforce representative of the community.

We look forward to receiving further input on Bill 79 as the legislative process continues. A number of issues have already been brought to my attention for further consideration. Seniority is one, for example.

I feel the current bill is clear on the issues of layoff and recall. But further clarification might be necessary to acknowledge that any seniority provisions in collective bargaining agreements can remain intact and are not considered barriers to employment equity, providing there is no adverse impact on designated groups.

Some groups have already suggested that we move some of the things currently in the regulation into the legislation, and others have asked that we ensure that the confidentiality of sensitive information is fully protected.

I'm certainly open to considering these and other issues further. As the summer consultation process and hearings proceed, I will be suggesting to my colleagues some proposals for amendments to clarify and refine the effectiveness and workability of Bill 79 and the draft regulation package.

It is in everyone's best interests to continue to work together, for there is much at stake if we do not.

Continued employment discrimination against aboriginal people, persons with disability, racial minorities and

women will exact an enormous toll in both human and financial terms.

As one of Ontario's employers, Manulife Financial has said, and I quote: "Employment equity is not only a legal, social and moral obligation. It is also a commonsense business policy designed to increase productivity, improve our ability to attract and retain talented employees and enhance our position in both domestic and international markets."

I would add that employment equity also means no Ontarian will ever feel that doors are closed to him or her because of aboriginal status, disability, race or gender, and that each and every one of us will have the opportunity to aspire to and work towards fulfilling employment.

That is how employment equity will affect our lives; that is the legacy we are leaving to our children. I think we have good reason to be proud of that achievement today.

1640

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I thank the honourable minister for her contribution and invite any questions and/or comments.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): We have been long awaiting this bill to reach this stage, and I am happy to see that it is here. I can't say I'm ecstatically happy about the way it has been done; however, now that it is here to be debated, I welcome that opportunity.

I had no time to read the regulation, because it was presented to us about 12 o'clock and I had no time to read it in its entirety, but we have an opportunity later on to comment on it.

As you know, this bill is a far cry from Bob Rae's opposition bill that he had put forward when he was in opposition. My, my, how things have changed when we got to Damascus. The fact is that we have changed our tune completely.

I'll just put my concern on the record for the minister, who has worked very hard on this. I am concerned that this bill is being sold as a benefit to women. I tell you, there are other people who are being discriminated against, and I'd like to see the same fanfare that is put forward with regard to women put towards visible minorities, the aboriginal people and the disabled. I didn't see that kind of stuff. If we start on the wrong foot, I'm sure we're going to end up without any feet at all.

It seems to me that the unions have cut a deal and have gotten their way somehow with regard to the layoff and callback and seniority in this bill. We just hope that when we are given the opportunity to amend the regulations we will address that concern. We have a very intelligent, capable Employment Equity Commissioner. I appeal to the minister: Use that individual and don't put that individual in the back. I hope she had

some opportunity to participate in the regulations. We've got a lot more to say when the time comes for me to debate this issue.

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): I want to thank and congratulate the minister today for presenting the employment equity legislation for second reading. I think the minister has pointed out quite accurately, and in a manner that I want to embrace, the benefits of this legislation. As I look around the galleries, looking over to the members' gallery I see Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré, whose confirmation hearing I had the pleasure of sitting in on not all that long ago, and we've come even further since that day.

The employment equity legislation, as the minister has outlined, addresses issues of equality, justice, dignity and excellence. We are not talking about pandering to the lowest common denominator. We are not talking about going out and hiring people simply because they happen to represent a designated group. We're talking about promoting excellence; we're talking about equality in the workplace.

I want to say that I will stand proudly and support this legislation. If it's the will of the House leader, I will certainly be able to participate on committee hearings and to take this piece of legislation and give it the kind of just hearing it deserves, to take it around the province, to get the kinds of input it needs.

The member for Scarborough North made some comments with respect to the usual too little, too late, too slow. I ask the member for Scarborough North: Where was he, where was his government, in terms of employment equity? I can even answer my own question by simply stating "nowhere." Nowhere, and it's taken our government and it's taken our minister, the Honourable Elaine Ziemba, in terms of intensive consultation with business and labour groups, to bring forward a bill that will redress generations and generations of discrimination and inequities in the workplace.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Thank you. Further questions and/or comments? The honourable Minister of Citizenship has two minutes in response.

Hon Ms Ziemba: It's been a very proud day to come back to the House for second reading and to say to all of my colleagues that I'm very pleased with their participation as well.

Employment equity is a fundamental goal and a dream that we must attain, because it means that not only will we have fairness in the workplace but we also will have the benefits, the social benefits and the economic benefits, of the most talented people in our society. For too long we have witnessed the fact that those people have been shut out and we have not had the opportunity for their expertise, their talents to be part of the workplace.

Employment equity is also, though, about joint partnership. It's about making sure that all the employees in the workplace share together in those goals and those dreams and work together to make sure that it is effective. I think that the joint responsibility in Bill 79 and in the regulations makes sure that we will have a much better, effective piece of legislation and that the dream of recognizing that all of our citizens are included in the workplace will come to a reality.

Today, as we released the regulation, I looked around the room. I have to mention this little private thought I had. I looked around the room and there were about 200 people who shared in that dream, 200 people who were representative designated groups of employers—yes, of employers—who believe very strongly in employment equity because of its fairness, because of its justice and because of its good economic business sense. But I also saw the labour movement there too, willing to be a joint partner in this great piece of legislation.

So I want to take the opportunity to thank my colleagues and to thank the Employment Equity Commissioner, because she has played a very significant role and continues to do so. I also want in just a very special moment to thank the deputy minister, because without her work and her hard dedication as well, this would not have come about today. So to all of the staff and to everybody who's worked so hard, thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker: I wish to thank the Honourable Minister of Citizenship for her participation and for her response. Further debate?

Mr Curling: Mr Speaker, may I ask that this debate be adjourned until a latter date?

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Scarborough North is moving adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE PLAN D'INVESTISSEMENT

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 17, An Act to provide for the Capital Investment Plan of the Government of Ontario and for certain other matters related to financial administration / Loi prévoyant le plan d'investissement du gouvernement de l'Ontario et concernant d'autres questions relatives à l'administration financière.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The minister of government services? Any member on the government side? Further debate.

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. For the benefit of the people who are watching, I'm sure they must be confused, because today we've jumped from the Sunday shopping vote to employment equity and now to Bill 17. I think this is one of the problems with this government, that we don't seem to be able to stick to one subject, discuss it, then

debate it and—

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. On a point of order, the honourable member for Scarborough Centre.

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The issue under debate at this point is the bill with respect to capital corporations, not the government and not the orders of the day.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. It's an opinion. The member for Nepean.

Mr Daigeler: If the member insists that we prolong the debate further beyond what is necessary, then he should just keep doing what he's doing, because I think the public has a right to know what we're discussing in this House, and I'm sure there are a lot of people out there who are rather confused about the agenda.

Frankly, we were confused. On the order paper today there was no mention whatsoever about employment equity. We were supposed to discuss right now OTAB, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. But for the public's benefit, what we're discussing at this point is an issue that could be of great importance to the province, and frankly, I'm open to look at the issue with a fair and unbiased mind.

What we are discussing is a new way of financing major capital expenditures in the province. That would include education facilities, schools, colleges and universities. We're also talking about sewer and water works and we're talking about road construction. This Bill 17 has actually several sections that establish different corporations, sort of semi-private. They aren't really private corporations because in the end the province will still be responsible for all the debt. However, there will be sort of a private/public sector corporation to try and levy more money for capital construction.

1650

Frankly, I think that's a sound idea. I think we would all agree that if we can find more private sector money to do more capital construction, that's just what we need, especially at this time right now when there are so many people unemployed. I have been arguing with the government for a long time, especially surrounding the 416, and Mr Speaker, you're from this area as well, how important it would be to put in place, to get going, to put a shovel in the ground right now to show the people out there that the economy is moving again, that we're building and that we're improving the situation.

On principle I think it's a great idea to try and leverage more money for capital construction, be that for the schools. I come from a growing area fortunately in my riding of Nepean. There's still housing construction going on, but that means of course the school facilities are lagging behind. That's a way to get the schools a bit faster.

However, I think there are some serious questions

whether what we're doing here is in fact going to leverage new money or whether this isn't just an accounting measure, and perhaps I should say trick, to load off the expenditures of the budgetary document of the Treasurer so that he can say, "Okay, we have reduced our expenditures dramatically." His books look much better. That's a serious concern that we have on this side of the House.

Frankly, it isn't just a concern that I have or a concern that the Liberals have. It is a concern by very reputable sources, including the Bank of Nova Scotia. I have in front of me here—I guess it's the latest newsletter—of the Bank of Nova Scotia, dated May 19, 1993. In this newsletter the bank is analysing the most recent provincial budget that we have just seen introduced in this House. Guess what they are saying in here? I quote now.

"New financial arrangements are being implemented that will transfer \$1.7 billion"—so it's a lot of money we're talking about—"of capital spending off budget"—off the public books of the province—"by fiscal year 1995-96."

The newsletter of the Scotia Bank goes on to say:

"While this accounting shift increasingly reduces the reported deficit, it locks the government into higher spending in subsequent years. Under the new procedures the province provides no upfront money, but is committed to repay the project loans initially incurred by school boards, colleges, universities, hospitals and so on."

That is the Bank of Nova Scotia talking. It isn't just the Liberals. There are some obvious financial experts who are also raising questions about this method.

Frankly, when I read here about burdening subsequent governments and putting a fiscal burden on future generations and future members of this House, we know that with the social contract that was just introduced, with the legislation on Monday, my leader Lyn McLeod has made that very point as well, that she is so concerned about: Are we, in the way we are putting measures forward, harming the future rather than helping the future?

With their social contract idea, I think they had a reasonable and a good idea. We agree and we've made that very clear. We agree that the finances of this province have to be put back into order. My leader has clearly said that. But we certainly don't want to do this by simply postponing the day of reckoning.

That's what we're so concerned about regarding the social contract negotiations and that's what we're concerned about with regard to the bill that's before us, Bill 17, the bill to establish crown capital corporations. Are we just offloading expenditures off the books of the province and leaving a tremendous debt burden to be paid back, with perhaps relatively high mortgage rates,

as it were, for future generations? I think that is a very serious concern.

I want to talk in particular about the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp. As I indicated, there are various sections. One gives the general framework for the corporations. There's one that establishes the Ontario Financing Authority. There's one that establishes the Ontario Clean Water Agency. Another one establishes the Ontario Realty Corp. Then there's another section, part III actually, that establishes the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp.

Since I happen to be the Liberal critic for Transportation, obviously I have a special interest in this particular section of the bill, even though of course I'm also interested and concerned about the overall framework which we're putting forward. Essentially what this section, part III, the establishment of the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp, makes possible is the use of road tolls.

To make the whole thing a bit simpler, the idea here is that perhaps we could get private funding, be that pension funds, some interests from other countries as well, insurance companies, any kind of rather well-heeled funding agencies, that would put money up front to build new roads. Then, since of course we're talking about private interests, they want to see a return on their money. They're not just going to give it to the province, as it were, for free and be generous. They'll want a return, and that return would come in through tolls.

It is true that we had, I think in the early 1950s, some of these toll roads in Ontario as well. We've moved away from them. But as an idea, knowing full well that through the normal taxing effort it is probably going to be very difficult to find the billions of dollars that are required for major new roads, such as, for example, Highway 407, I think it's worthwhile to look at the possibility whether there's enough interest in the private sector, in the North American or international private sector, to invest in the building of major roads.

1700

I think it's worth taking a serious look at. I accept that, and I'm quite prepared to hear from the private sector and to see whether it is possible to in fact interest the private sector and—and I think that “and” is very important—under what conditions. I'll come back to those conditions shortly.

I should say that this basic willingness to consider road tolls as a means to fund major transportation projects is supported by people in my own riding. I did a telephone survey in March of this year and I asked my people. The question was: “It's been proposed to use road tolls for major new highway projects,” such as the 416, for example, in my riding in eastern Ontario, and of course in the Speaker's riding as well. “How do you feel about paying for major new roads through user fees? Do you agree very much, agree somewhat,

disagree somewhat, disagree very much?”

I should tell you that the opinions were divided. The distribution was as follows: agree very much, about 30%, or 29.5; agree somewhat, 26%. So almost 60% of the people in my riding are prepared to look at the possibility of road tolls. Now, disagree somewhat was 12% and disagree very much was 32%. So while there's overall support for the idea, there are also—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think the points that are being made are very good. In fact, I think we should have a quorum to hear them.

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals (Mr Alex D. McFedries): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Nepean may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Daigeler: I'm pleased that the seats are filling up here to listen to what I have to say. At least, I hope the members will be listening. But whether they are listening or not, I think the important point that I was trying to make was that the people in my riding are in fact willing to take a look, to examine the idea of road tolls.

As I said, the possibility of using road tolls will be a reality through this bill before us, through the section that deals with the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp.

In the survey that I did in my riding, I just indicated to you that about 60% said, “I agree with the idea,” or, “I agree somewhat.” I should say that there was a clear division between the younger people and the older people. Very clearly, the younger people were a lot less likely to support the idea of toll roads than the older people. I'll just give you an example. Of those between 18 and 24 years of age, there were only 14% who agreed very much with this idea, whereas of those 65 years and over, about 39% of those people said, “Yes, we agree with the idea of using road tolls for the construction of major new highways.”

I should say, though, that the people, when they were contacted by the student who did the phoning on my behalf, even though they may have been supportive, did put forward some qualifiers. For example, they said: “Okay, that's fine but only for new roads. We certainly don't want to move to the maintenance, as it were, of our road system through the toll system.”

Also, and I think that's important to remember, quite a few said, “As long as our taxes are adjusted.” So they are really concerned that this is just another way to raise taxes. Frankly, I think that is an extremely important point and that's what I'm so concerned about as well, that while we are moving these costs off the books of the province and while the government may avoid the

always unpleasant task of raising taxes through the normal legislative process, it would in fact be raising taxes the indirect way through those road tolls.

Frankly, the profit then for those road tolls, rather than going to all the people of the province, as they would with taxes, go to private interests. I think that's what some of my people are concerned about as well, and that's why I think it is so important to know what the conditions are under which the private sector would be permitted to use the income of the road tolls for the funding of major roads.

I understand that there are negotiations under way. I understand that there are two consortia being formed to put forward a proposal to the government, two consortia from the private sector bringing together different financial interests and that they are preparing a submission to the government to say, "Okay, here's the kind of money that we would be willing to invest and here's what we'd want to see in return."

Frankly, I've asked for a briefing from the Ministry of Transportation on how these negotiations and how these briefs are being shaped and I look forward to hearing more from the ministry on what's happening there because, as I said, in principle, I'm willing to look at it, but I want to see the details. I think especially with this government, we want to make sure the details are covered. As we have seen yesterday with the social contract negotiations, the legislation is very different from what we had expected and hoped for, and so I certainly will want to know in great detail what these arrangements will be with the private sector to build the highways.

I see here, in the *Financial Times* of May 29, that there was actually an editorial on this whole question and it was entitled, "Socialism and Private Enterprise Build a Highway." Whether it's socialism or the NDP—some NDP members, I think, are rather nervous to be identified with the socialists. Anyway, that's what the *Financial Times* used as the headline, and it quoted one of the provincial ministry officials and said, "We're going to find out whether the private sector can build roads faster and more cheaply than the government."

As I said, I think it's worth the experiment. We all are agreed that government is big and that we should try—I think the famous word these days is "out-source"—to use the private sector as much as we can to provide the services we want for the public.

1710

However, this is a very dangerous undertaking at the same time, as government traditionally has provided the services because no one else in the private sector was willing to take the risk or was only willing to do it in a way that wouldn't be fair and just across the board. That's what concerns me.

That's another concern I have with regard to the

Ontario Transportation Capital Corp. Are we setting up something here that may, in the end, favour only those areas of the province where the funding and the financing of roads is profitable for the private sector? And guess where that's going to be: obviously, the area where there are the most people using the roads and therefore paying more tolls, and that obviously would be in the greater Toronto area.

What about northern Ontario? What about eastern Ontario? Would there be enough private sector interest in building the roads there? Will the Treasurer, will the Minister of Transportation still have enough capital through the normal tax sources to build the roads in these other parts of the province, to build the infrastructure not just in the greater Metro area? And the greater Metro area needs the roads as well. I think the 407 is a much-needed project, and a lot of people would like to see this built faster rather than farther down the road.

Again, my point is simply this: We must make sure that with the setting up of this corporation and of the other corporations, we're not going to fall into what may be called the trap of the private sector and give the benefit only to those who can pay for it.

I certainly would hope that the NDP government in particular, which always prided itself on representing and working for the interests of the underprivileged, would take that into consideration and would make absolutely certain that the distribution and the assignment of road construction is not done across the province on the basis of where it brings in the most money.

I'd like to conclude at this point by simply repeating again that I am prepared to look at this legislation to see whether there is in fact enough private sector interest out there to start some of the very capital-intensive projects we need in terms of roadbuilding in this province. I'd certainly want to know and have a better assurance that, first of all, the private sector interest is there, that we're not building another new, major bureaucracy with these corporations. That's another concern I haven't even spoken much about, but seeing that the time is running on, I certainly don't want to create another WCB with these corporations.

The third point is that the funding that will be going to these corporations—

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The concluding remarks I think are equally as important as the middle remarks, so there should be a quorum here to hear them.

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Nepean may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Daigeler: Thank you very much. I appreciate that the member for Etobicoke West has great interest in what I have to say and wants to make sure that the members opposite as well hear the conclusion of my speech and not only the middle and the beginning.

To resume with the final points I wished to make, we must make sure that the financing that will happen through these private/government-related capital corporations, private/public sector combined corporations—that in their funding they will provide just and equitable distribution of their projects throughout the province and not just on the basis of where there would be the greatest return and that therefore the infrastructure investment would only be in the population-rich areas of this province. I think this is very, very important.

My final point, and I think this is perhaps the most important one, is that this shift of all the capital construction out of the budget books of the Treasurer and of the provincial government must not become just a smokescreen to hide, as it were, the real debt of this province, because one thing that we must remember—I haven't mentioned this yet, but it's certainly time to mention this now—is that the debt that these corporations will carry will in fact stay with the province. In the end the province is still responsible for any debt that may have been accumulated, and will have been accumulated, the long-term debt, by these corporations. While it may not appear on the books of the province, as the WCB debt, for example, does not appear on the books of the province, it's still a major burden on the global fiscal shoulders of the province. It's the same thing with Ontario Hydro: The figures and the finances of Ontario Hydro do not appear in the budget book of the Treasurer, but nevertheless there's still a debt and a burden, and a great burden, I would say, on all of our shoulders and on all of the shoulders of all the people of Ontario.

With these observations and with these concerns that I've been able to express, I would like to conclude now, and thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to comment.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?
1720

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I want to be clear on something here, and I'm going to touch on a couple of points the member for Nepean has made.

The federal government, right after our provincial election in 1990, had neglected its responsibilities. That was clear. The federal government said, basically: "We don't care about Ontario. We don't care about the fact that most of your constituents want jobs. We're not going to deal with capital. We're not going to deal with any of the stuff that matters at the grass roots." They didn't do that. They didn't care and they don't care now.

We had a responsibility and we realized it. The Premier realized it and the Treasurer realized it. The responsibility was and still is that this government should be committed to creating jobs, and what the member has just finished talking about was, in all essence, jobs. The provincial government had committed to creating jobs.

He mentioned things like the toll booths, Highway 407, capital, things that would not have happened if this government weren't in place. This is a commitment that was made, it was an announcement, and I'm confident that this will create jobs that people are waiting for in the construction industry.

Mr Speaker, I don't have much time, but I've got to tell you, the stuff that he talked about, the jobs that he talked about we are committed to and this proves it.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I'd like to take a few moments just to congratulate the member from Nepean for his very thoughtful comments on a very important piece of legislation. I think that if anyone, and most importantly the previous individual who has spoken, had listened to the comments from the member from Nepean, he would have heard that there were some concerns raised by the member.

I think the member brought forward to this Legislature in a very real and telling way some of the mindset of his constituents. I think that's some of the opportunity and responsibility that we in this Legislature have and I think the member from Nepean has done so. He has taken some of the thoughts of his constituents and rolled them into what is a very important, potentially dramatically impacting piece of legislation.

I think that all of us in this Legislature share, or should share, the real possibility that this particular piece of legislation will be used as a vehicle, where the government can move \$600 million, \$700 million or \$800 million of debt off its books on to the books of these capital corporations. What will happen as a result of that is that the public in this province will not be able to see the true financial status of the treasury of the province. They will not be able to see where their tax dollars are or are not going or where they should be going. That's one of the dangers of legislation of this kind which seeks to set up these types of capital corporations.

Again, I would just like to congratulate the member for Nepean for speaking so eloquently about this legislation and for bringing to this Legislature the thoughts, concerns and opinions of his constituents.

Mr Owens: I want to thank the member for Nepean for his considered comments and his thoughtful input in this matter. In terms of the member from Mississauga North's comments, I understand that the member for Nepean cares about his constituents and represents them in an able manner, although an NDP member could

probably do better, but we'll give the other member credit where credit is due.

The member asks questions like why do we need these corporations, but then also suggests that these corporations are a good idea in terms of the building of schools, particularly in the area of Nepean, which, as the member indicated, is thriving and growing and in need of capital investment.

What the creating of these corporations will do, particularly the Ontario Financing Authority, will be to allow the long-term commitment of capital to regions like the honourable member's, so that in fact the schools can be built a lot sooner, can take advantage of counter-cyclical financing, and in terms of lower borrowing costs and continued capital.

I think the message here is that we simply cannot continue business as usual in terms of how governments have relied on flowing capital from year to year. This government has made a strong commitment and we've demonstrated our commitment to capital investment in the two and a half years that we've been here.

We simply have come to the conclusion that we need to do things in a different way, and the capital corporations legislation allows us to do things in a better way, a more nimble way and a more accountable way by keeping our commitment to the people of Ontario.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): I listened attentively to my colleague from Nepean, who has done an excellent job. His thoughtful comments were being listened to, and I just hope that the government listened and took notes of what he said, because in that direction, I'm sure you can have an improved bill to be presented to the people of Ontario.

I want to say that he continues to make this contribution to this House, but I am concerned really about the direction this government is going. You have a last-minute repentance now to say to yourself, "Yes, I have listened and I will take what he has said under consideration," and make sure this is done.

With that in mind, again thanks to the member from Nepean for his excellent comments.

Mr Daigeler: Let me thank all the members who have spoken in response to my speech. Obviously, the member from Scarborough North, the member from Mississauga North, but also the other members of the House opposite I think have realized that I tried to put on the record some thoughts from the people of my own riding, and I have taken, frankly, this step of asking the opinion of my own constituents.

But I did want to say that I very much agreed with the member from Yorkview when he said what this is all about and what he wants to do is create jobs. Frankly, if that's where we're going to end up, I'm all in favour. I certainly agree with him that we want to get rid of the unemployment. That's the scourge that we'll

hopefully all unite to try and eradicate from this province. I think there's nothing worse than people who are for years without income and without work, and capital construction has traditionally been one way—not the only way, but an important way to get the economy moving to provide employment.

However, the member from Yorkview also said Highway 407 wouldn't have come about if it weren't for this particular bill. Well, we haven't seen the 407 yet. There's nothing in the ground yet, and frankly that's the concern I have, as I had with OTAB, that it will take so long to set up this corporation and these corporations; it will take so long to arrive at a negotiated solution with the private sector to finance these roads that frankly, by the time all of this stuff is set up legally, we will be through the recession, and that's another concern that I have.

Mr Stockwell: I'm pleased to rise today and discuss this bit of jiggery-pokery on the financial end of the NDP's last financial statement, or their budget.

Any unbiased third party would read this piece of legislation and know full well what exactly the government is trying to do. Everyone understands that there's more than meets the eye to this piece of legislation. They can spout on about—

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Have you read it, Chris?

Mr Stockwell: As usual, I have my friends the View Brothers down in York here today. Without missing a beat, I got heckled before I got started. But down in York, anyone would see exactly what is taking place with this piece of legislation.

This government has a very serious financial problem. It's well known they went to great lengths to point it out to anyone who would listen during the previous five or six months. They inflated their deficit number to some \$17 billion, then miraculously brought it down to some \$9 billion. That's why it was inflated: It was never \$17 billion in the first place. I guess everyone knows that, including their union friends Sid Ryan, Liz Barkley and so on, who pointed that out in very direct terms to them during the social contract discussions.

1730

None the less, they had a significant problem with respect to the deficit. Whether it was \$12 billion or \$13 billion or so, they had a problem, so they had to figure out advanced, new, smoke and mirror methods to somehow show the constituents out there, the taxpayers, that they were financially solvent and financially responsible, without really having to be that. So that's how we get the Capital Investment Plan Act, 1993.

I'm glad to see a number of members have stuck around to hear my comments. They're applauding now. I'm pleased, because I don't even think the backbenchers in the government party, once they hear the

enlightening comments I'm going to give them, will even think themselves to start second-guessing this piece of legislation.

Imagine, if you can, cabinet sitting around one day, finishing up their rice pudding. They're trying to say, "Okay, what are we going to do to get this deficit down?" Somebody had the bright idea someplace and said, "Why don't we do something that we were completely and thoroughly opposed to when we were in opposition?" Of course, those ideas go over well over there. So that person said, "Why don't we start quasi-crown corporations, things that we were really diametrically opposed to because it's nothing more than really the first step to contracting out, thereby set up crown corporations for a number of agencies, create paper transfers and in fact don't reduce the debt at all but simply shift it?" Of course, there was a huge round of applause in cabinet that day when that person came up with this bit of jiggery-pokery.

So we had the Capital Investment Plan Act, 1993, and it was roundly endorsed by cabinet. They sold it to caucus—probably three or four salient questions were asked, no doubt—and they processed it on to this Legislature.

What have they done? We know this: They're going to start these quasi-crown corporations—the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp, the Ontario Clean Water Agency, the Ontario Realty Corp—and they're going to be overseen by the Ontario Financing Authority.

Who and what does this mean? Let's start at the last one and work our way up.

The Ontario Realty Corp: Here's a gas, folks. This is a real good one. This had the deep thinkers in deep thought, no doubt, for probably a couple of months over there. "What can we do to generate more revenue for the coffers?" They said, "What we should do is, we should package up all the surplus land that we own in the province of Ontario and sell it to ourselves, take that money we had to borrow to buy from ourselves and apply it against our debt and call ourselves financial wizards."

So we had the makings of the Ontario Realty Corp. That's what they did. Just to say, "We're not just doing it with land," they sold themselves the domed stadium for the third time again, just to round out the thinking on that group.

Here's the Ontario Realty Corp: A group of cabinet ministers taking the surplus land in their own ministries, striking the Ontario Realty Corp, giving it authorization to go out and borrow. They go and borrow the money. They buy the land from the government. The government guarantees the loan. They haven't reduced the deficit by one nickel, yet on their financial statements the deficit comes down by the appropriate amount that they borrowed to buy the land from their right pocket,

as opposed to their left. That's the deep thinking that went into this piece of legislation. That was the reason this legislation was adopted.

It was a cosy place to put the domed stadium, because I guess they thought at this time: "We've already sold the domed stadium twice. I don't think anyone's going to believe we could sell it a third time. Let's move it over to the Ontario Land Corp." That was a nice, comfortable place to put the domed stadium. They've taken credit for the sale of the domed stadium twice before, I might add, in both their previous budgets. Of course, it was never bought, so they've been reduced to selling it to themselves, which is curious, to say the least.

That wasn't it. They thought: "The Ontario Realty Corp. Jeez, they're going to need some employees. We want to pretend that we're cutting the staff of this province, so why don't we do this?" A brainwave—you could see it shaking the table around that cabinet. "Why don't we take some employees from the provincial government, move them to this Ontario Realty Corp and tell everybody we've reduced the staff complement?" Aren't they special? Here they are, at cabinet once again, reducing the staff complement by moving these people over to a realty corporation that they guarantee the debt and also the wages for. The jiggery-pokery continues.

Clearly, at this meeting they thought this was such a special idea, such a great idea, such a wonderful idea, that they said: "Why stop there? We don't need to stop with land. For goodness' sake, we could do the same with, say, water." Lo and behold, probably at the same meeting, maybe the meeting after, somebody said, "The Ontario Clean Water Agency," and lo and behold, not just land; they were doing it with water. These people don't stop thinking, do they? They're just always on the ball, for ever and ever thinking of new and effective ways to pull the wool over the taxpayers' eyes.

No doubt after they thought of that, the Minister of Transportation shook with fear when this came to him, I'm sure, and he said, "Gee, if they can do it with land and they can do it with water, why don't we do it with roads?" Lo and behold, poof, one magic day in cabinet: the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp.

But you've got to understand what are the two prerequisites of starting a crown corporation in this government: (1) They remove some debt that's properly on the books of the provincial government off book, hide it, so they don't have to show it to the taxpayers, and (2) they move some employees who are truly on the government payroll off to this crown corporation, so they don't have to say they have the employees.

Then they can go back to the electorate in 1995 and say, "We reduced the debt by this much," which they moved, and, "We reduced the staff by this much," which they moved. That was the rationale, reasoning

and deep thinking that went into this at the cabinet level.

Oh, we all must remember, we all must keep one very simple point in mind: This party is fundamentally and structurally for ever opposed to exactly this. If some of those backbenchers who never sat in this place during previous years would like to get some clarification, you should probably go look at the sewer corporation. Remember that? You guys were opposed to that, because you said that's taking responsible processes that should be with government out of government's control and thereby leaving them in the private sector's or non-taxpayers' capacity.

You opposed all those specific regulations. Of course, that was then and this is now. You know that statement. We saw it very early on Sunday shopping, exactly how "then" and "now" have no relationship to each other.

Here's what we have; we have this. But they thought to themselves: "My goodness, we're very cunning, aren't we? We're very sly. We're very smart. We haven't gone far enough. We haven't done enough. What should we do now?" They said to themselves, "Gee, don't we grant money to municipalities and school boards for capital projects?" Someone said yes, probably the Premier. That's a tough question only a Rhodes scholar could answer.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Wasn't there a Rhodes scholars' convention?

Mr Stockwell: He was at a Rhodes scholars' convention in Washington. He'd have to answer the tough questions, like, "Do we grant money?"

What did they do? They said, "Let's think of a new way of doing this." Floyd must have come up with this one, because this has got an economics professor earmark stamped all over it. He said: "We used to grant money, didn't we? We used to grant money for roads and schools." Mr Owens, you probably don't remember that, but that's in the old days when provincial governments were responsible and did things they were supposed to.

But what happened was that municipalities gave a priority list for schools and roads, and they granted the proper amount of money to build those. Of course, Floyd thought, or someone a lot like Floyd thought, "That's not a good way to do it any more." "Why is that, Floyd?" "Because I've borrowed so much money in the last two years to run this province, nobody will lend me any more."

"So what do you think you should do, Floyd?" Floyd thought for probably a month, and then he said: "Why don't we do this? Why don't we tell municipalities: 'You borrow the money? You use your good credit rating. You use your good capacity to borrow. You use your responsible managerial approach, and you blow it, you put it on the line. You mess up like we did.'"

Mr Bradley: And then it won't show in the provincial books.

Mr Stockwell: And then it won't show in the provincial books. My friend from St Catharines puts a very interesting spin on that, one that I'm certain I thought of, and you did. But I'm quite certain they didn't think of this when this was happening because they are solid and up front and wouldn't do this jiggery-pokery, would they? But they did.

1720

So what did they do? They told their transfer partners—it's funny, as I've said before, that you call them your partners. They are calling you a lot of names, but "partner" is not one of them. You said, "Why don't you go out and borrow the money over 20 years and then we'll pay you back every year for the 20 years." And what are the partners saying, of course? "Gee, we don't trust you." They don't trust them to pay the money back over 20 years. Why is that? Probably because you've changed your mind on some very important issues in the last couple of years and your word is worth mud.

Your partners are saying, "No, you want me to borrow the money because you're going to make one instalment and then you're going to cut me off as part of a new austerity program." This government is full of good ideas for this government, but they're not full of fair ideas for their partners.

So that's how we got to this date, stage and time when we get to debate the Capital Investment Plan Act, 1993. The jiggery-pokery act is how I like to refer to it.

And that's not all. They were deep thinkers over there so they decided: "Boy, if we are going to have to start this particular authorizing agency, the Ontario Financing Authority, because now we have three corporations at work—the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp, the Ontario Clean Water Agency and the Ontario Realty Corp—then we'll have to strike a whole bureaucracy that oversees them. Then we can move a whole bunch more employees off the books." They came up with a corporation to oversee the three corporations that were buying land from them for assessed values to sell to nobody, and they needed bureaucrats to manage bureaucrats to negotiate with themselves.

Mr Bradley: Weren't they opposed to the water corporation?

Mr Stockwell: Gee, it's funny. I did mention that not long ago in my speech, about when they were in opposition and how they were opposed to that because they said it was a capital infringement on the true democratic rights of the public service and the taxpayers' ability to govern their own affairs.

Mr Bradley: It was a tool for developers as well, I thought.

Mr Stockwell: It was a tool for developers. That's the kind of thing they said; my friend the member for St

Catharines makes a very valid point. But that was then and this is now. This is why we got the jiggery-pokery act.

They've decided that since they've got these three corporations they now need a bureaucracy established under the Minister of Finance, the brainstormer on this one, to oversee the bureaucrats who are going to manage what we all used to do in the old days, which was simply to grant money; in fact, to ask local authorities to borrow and then you'll pay them back. You'll probably never pay them back and that's why they don't trust you.

We have defences coming forward from municipalities like the one in Nepean. His complaints were rather serious and reasonable. Look, they're probably going to stand in line in Metropolitan Toronto for certain transit improvements. The View Brothers know that in Yorkview and Downsview. You would know very clearly that on some of those transit corridors you have been working on, they are going to have some private input; we know there is going to be some private. But in the hinterlands, out of Toronto, such as any number of ridings around the province, there's not going to be any private commitment for road improvements, there's not going to be any capital money being invested by the private sector.

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Name four rural ridings.

Mr Stockwell: Four rural ridings? Yours.

Mr Bradley: That's Hastings-Peterborough.

Mr Stockwell: I know four rural ridings. I'll just look down here: Huron and a few others.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Two more.

Mr Stockwell: Well, yours would have been rural, but dump sites are zoned commercial, aren't they?

Places like Nepean and Huron and Elgin and—I know it and I forget it. These kinds of ridings don't have the capital investment. Why? Because there's no zoning next to these roads. There's no huge money to be made for roads to go through, for development application in the middle of the woods. I mean, who's going to build an office tower in the middle of the woods? They didn't think of that when they struck this up, because the only thing they were thinking about was moving debt off the province on to a private crown corporation and moving employees out, so when they go back to the people in 1995 they can claim they reduced staff and retired some debt when they did neither. But you weren't thinking about building office towers in the woods. That's the kind of thing this means to the rural ridings around the province of Ontario.

Mr Bradley: An office tower like the WCB building?

Mr Stockwell: Yes, that's an office tower. It's a shame that one went ahead, because it's cost them a

significant amount of money. I was very interested to see the member from Hamilton, who is now the Minister of Labour, stand up and defend that decision.

But I was equally shocked—my friend from St Catharines I'm certain was—to see that on the Sunday shopping bill that was debated today and voted on, the same member who represents Hamilton voted in favour of Sunday shopping. I thought he was the defender of the common pause day. I must have been mistaken, as well as about 10 million other Ontarians.

We now have this government's position on quasi-crown corporations established under the jiggery-pokery act, 1993.

What is this party's position? Our party's position is I think reasonable and fair. We think this legislation—I've lost my friend from St Catharines.

Mr Bradley: I'm just going to my own seat.

Interjections.

Mr Bradley: Tories sit over there now, don't they?

Mr Stockwell: I used to recognize them as socialists. They're unrecognizable today, specifically after the Sunday shopping vote. My friend from Windsor, the Minister of Education and Training, who was a staunch defender of the common pause day, himself voted in favour of Sunday shopping, which left one breathless, I might add, breathless.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): Not you. No one can leave you breathless.

Mr Stockwell: No, Mr Cooke, you left me breathless. Your Treasurer often leaves me breathless with some of his jiggery-pokery bills. This is one of them.

What do we say? As a party and as a caucus, we dismiss this. We dismiss it for what it is: blatant political gamesmanship. It's on the agenda for one reason and one reason only: to fool the taxpayers of the province of Ontario into thinking that you know what you're doing. That's all it's here for. It's here to convince the taxpayers in the province of Ontario that their debt isn't as high because they're moving it off-book and that they don't have as many employees because they're moving them into these crown corps. That is shameful.

If you think this is a good idea, implement it. You don't have to strike these corporations. Implement it. Show the debt on your book and show the employees on your book, and if you think you have too many employees, get rid of some.

But this? This is silly. This is a waste of time, effort and taxpayers' money. This is deceitful and this is dishonest, because you're going to go in 1995 before the tax-paying public, you sorry lot, and you're going to try and get yourself re-elected on this, the jiggery-pokery act of 1993, and that is shameful from a group who piously held such ponderous positions as

opposing the water sewage corporation in opposition because of its attack on the public sector. You've gone them three better, all for the sake of a pretence that you have tried to manage the economy and the budget in this province of Ontario.

I don't know how you can let this through. I don't know how you can agree to this kind of stuff. You sold out so many times, it's offensive on every occasion, and each time a new piece of legislation comes through you can quote chapter and verse from Hansard of how you opposed this decade after decade, yet now you sit there in a sheepish, mouse-like fashion saying nothing other than, "We've got to do it because we messed up badly for a couple of years in the finances." Shame on you.

1750

We in this caucus and this party believe that the method that was in place was a good method. Granted, it made you make tough decisions. It didn't allow us to borrow too much money because it had to be shown on the books. Sometimes to local municipalities you had to say no to their capital improvements, but it's better to say no than spend money that you don't have, giving it to them for political purposes.

These corporations are going to run up huge debts that you won't be able to control, and I cite but one example—this should send shudders down your spine—WCB, the same kind of concept. And where are they? An \$11-billion, \$12-billion, \$13-billion unfunded liability. Big mistake.

You've had an opportunity for nearly three years to fix the swamp, as Mr Mackenzie used to talk about. He refuses to get involved. He talks about an arm's-length position on that issue. You have no position any more. You've just washed your hands of it. Now you're setting up three more that can borrow money and bankrupt this province for future generations. Shame on you, Mr Speaker.

Hon Mr Buchanan: Did you hear what he said? Ask him to apologize.

Mr Stockwell: I apologize. It was shame on you, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Take your seat for a minute. I know you didn't mean that.

Mr Stockwell: No. I guess you didn't hear the comma.

Finally, I don't think the situation as it was set up before was too bad. I think it was a reasonable way to approach capital spending.

You know something? Those partners that refer to you by other names, they don't think it's a bad idea, the old process, either. They're not buying into Cooke's idea about education funding. They're not buying into it. He can tell you they are. They're not. He can tell you Metro Toronto's negotiating right now to send him a cheque for the social contract. This is the member from

Never Never Land if he thinks that Metro Toronto's going to send him a cheque as part of the social contract for education funding. That's just nuts. They don't think the old method was so bad.

You know something else? I don't necessarily think that toll booths are a bad idea, if that's what you want to do.

Mr David Winninger (London South): You don't necessarily think at all.

Mr Stockwell: Good one. There's London again, piping up. Good. Keep it going. You're on a roll.

I don't think toll booths are a bad idea either, but I don't know why you have to set this crown corporation up to put a toll booth up on Highway 407. Why do you have to do that? What's the point? You can do it right now. It was done in Hamilton some number of years ago. You can do it without starting these crown companies.

The ultimate insult to the people of this province is your Ontario Realty Corp. That is an absolute joke. You're selling property that you own to yourselves and claiming to write down the debt that you just paid yourselves, that you borrowed, for heaven's sake. What kind of logic is there in that, claiming you don't owe this money any more because you borrowed it from another bank? You still have to pay it.

That's how you're claiming you're writing down your deficit targets. If you don't think I'm right, read the legislation. You're borrowing \$800 million this year, \$1.2 billion next year and \$1.7 billion the year after, and every year you're going to claim your deficit's under \$10 billion because you're moving debts off the books.

We won't support this jiggery-pokery. We won't support this for all the right reasons. We won't support it for the children of this province who have to pay the bills. We won't support it because I fundamentally believe that the position they took in opposition opposing these crown corporations was a good position. I believed in that position that you used to enunciate and I believe in it today.

I don't care whether the Liberals tried it, the Conservatives tried it or you tried it. It's wrong. It's trying to fool the folks. When any government is involved in this kind of legislation, trying to fool the folks, you can count me out.

Mr Perruzza: Just to respond very briefly to the member from Etobicoke, we haven't had any real, major road construction or sewer construction in this province I guess since about the mid-1960s in any meaningful way. They were voted out of office I guess it would be in 1985. I can tell you from our own experience in Downsview that we need subways, we need sewers, we need water services and we need roads. We need all of these kinds of things.

We all know that the province is broke, that there's no money. So the great fiscal managers, the Conservatives, are telling us: "Since we're broke and we're probably going to be broke for the next 20 or 30 years, essentially, and we're going to be borrowing money to make ends meet, don't do any of these things. Don't do the kinds of things that are technically investments in our communities, that attract investment, that create jobs, that create progress, that get things moving."

The great fiscal managers are preaching to us today and they're saying: "Don't do any of these things. Don't use your land wealth. Don't be creative in trying to generate capital to build infrastructure, to build roads, to build sewers, to expand on water services and to get this province moving again."

That's what the great fiscal managers are telling us, the same great fiscal managers, the Conservatives, the Reaganites, who doubled the American debt, the great Mulroneyites who doubled the Canadian debt when they took office, the great Conservatives here for 40 years who left this province with a \$40-billion debt in 1985, the great fiscal managers.

Mr Bradley: I would simply like to comment on the previous speech and say that it was highly entertaining and very accurate in many parts of it, and certainly there are parts of that speech with which one could justifiably agree. There's no question in my mind that the member has identified the real purpose of this legislation, that is, to take some things off the books and put them somewhere else, so the government looks as though it has significantly reduced its deficit and its debt.

Hon Mr Cooke: Sewer or water corporation, Jim Bradley.

Mr Bradley: As the member for Windsor interjects, I can recall well the strong opposition of the New Democratic Party, which was very suspicious that the water corporation—they used the words "clean water corporation" because they wanted to be appealing to everyone—was going to be a tool for the developers to develop every last piece of land in the province of Ontario.

At the time I had a long discussion with the then Treasurer of the province and indicated clearly my concern about taking this out of the hands of the Ministry of the Environment and putting it in a separate corporation, because then there was at least a possibility that it would be a better tool for developers than if it were in the hands of the Ministry of the Environment, the main concern of the Ministry of the Environment being in fact that the water was clean and that the water was distributed in places it should be and that there were appropriate sewers being constructed at the same time.

There's no question in my mind that the present

government has capitulated to that sell in the Ministry of the Treasury, that sell which was put in there to put down the Ministry of the Environment, and now we find that this government which was so opposed to it in years gone by is in fact now in favour of such a corporation, and it's yet one more flip-flop.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Mr Speaker, we seem to have the wrong loudspeakers on. Okay. Thank you. Would you reset the time, Mr Speaker, since the microphone wasn't on properly?

The Deputy Speaker: We'll make sure that you have your two minutes. You will have your two minutes.

Mr Turnbull: Excuse me, Mr Speaker, we're given two minutes. He put the wrong microphone on.

The Deputy Speaker: Take your seat. You will have your two minutes.

Mr Turnbull: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wanted to comment and congratulate the member for Etobicoke West on his speech. He's gone to the heart of the question. That is that this is financial tricks. It's sleight of hand. You don't need to establish crown corporations in order to do some of the things that you're saying you're going to do. If you want to sell land, fair enough, sell crown property, fair enough, but don't start selling it to yourself and claiming it as revenue.

1800

I want to say that if this government were to adopt normal accounting standards, and in fact I've got to say if all governments in Canada, including the federal government, were to adopt the accounting standards which are common in business, this would not be allowed, because this is a scam.

We've seen the example of mismanagement at the Workers' Compensation Board, and all we're doing is recreating another WCB with these crown corporations. We are moving civil servants into these crown corporations. We're creating a whole new category of crown corporations so that they have the same guarantees of jobs as people who work for the civil service. They have all that security, and yet we are not doing anything other than trying to move it off-book so that this government looks a little bit better than in reality it is.

It's a lousy government that doesn't know how to run the economy, and the people of Canada are looking at this province and saying, "This is disgraceful." This weekend at the federal Conservative convention, people were coming up to me from all across Canada and saying, "What on earth is happening in your province?"

This is what the government is reduced to, doing financial tricks, the kind of thing that if you were doing it on an orange box at a corner, you would be arrested for it. That's what is happening. There is a complete lack of fiscal restraint.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Scarborough Centre. I would ask the House to simmer down a bit, please.

Mr Owens: The member for Etobicoke West talked about a meeting. Well, I'd like to reflect on a meeting of the caucus of the third party. If we could just quiet down for a minute, we could listen to the sound of the brain pattern when it comes to creativity.

Laughter.

Mr Owens: We hear laughter. The closest that this member has come to an idea with respect to the capital corporations, the closest this member has come to a brainstorm, is clearly a slight drizzle.

He alleges that in times of austerity the principal and interest payments will be cut off to municipalities, which is simply not true. He talks about this as a process of hiding debt. This is not true. Only members of the third party, the member for Etobicoke West, could even begin to think that you could hide 3,000 workers. Maybe this is how his federal friends conduct business, but this is clearly not what we're in the process of doing.

The accountability features of this legislation make these crown corporations accountable to the Legislature, accountable to the Provincial Auditor, through memos of understanding. These corporations are transparent.

Mr Stockwell: Just like your motives.

Mr Owens: We are simply not hiding.

How are we going to impact the municipal credit rating? The municipalities will not be doing the borrowing. The borrowing will be coordinated through the Ontario Financing Authority.

Mr Stockwell: You are so simple.

Mr Owens: Mr Speaker, the member for Etobicoke West is continuing to interrupt. I gave him his full 30 minutes. He is making allegations that this is a shell game, that this is smoke and mirrors. The member simply has not read the bill. The member does not understand what we are trying to do. The government is committed to capital financing in a new and creative manner that this member is not understanding.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Etobicoke West, you have two minutes.

Mr Stockwell: Well, apparently since the 1960s nothing has been built. I invite the member from Downsview out to Mississauga. You'll be able to see the 410, the 403. Certainly, you can use the Parkholme subway station up at North York or the Kipling line, Scarborough rapid transit line. Heard of that one? How about the Spadina line that they're building up Spadina Road? Heard of any of those? Those were built when darn good Conservative governments were involved. I move on.

If he doesn't know these things were built, then I just

don't think he gets around enough. He's too used to driving his imported Volkswagen rather than taking public transit. I move on, Mr Speaker.

I liked the comments from the member for St Catharines. He brings a lot of wisdom to the debate that was—

Mr Perruzza: That's why we've got sewer backups, that's why the water's yellow.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Downsview.

Mr Stockwell: —rather interesting during the 1985 to 1990 period of time, when the NDP was truly socialist. They're no longer socialists.

The member from Scarborough—this is hilarious. You don't even know how you're going to borrow the money to these crown corporations. You're telling me you're borrowing the money. Go talk to your Minister of Education and Training. He had to be enlightened the other day by the opposition and finally admits how you're borrowing the money. You have no idea how you're getting the money and you're supposed to be carrying this bill.

I'm not shocked, because they have meetings about creative financing. They're the best, bar none. You're far better than we are at creative financing, jiggery-pokery, smoke and mirrors, because that's what this is. It's so obvious and transparent, everybody sees through it. Your partners see through it; we see through it. For goodness' sake, you must know it's transparent because even the Liberals see through it.

I'll bring that Hansard back in a year or two and then I'll show him the books. I'll show you how you're going to borrow the money, I'll show you how you're going to make your repayments, I'll show you how you're selling the land to yourself and not out to the private sector, and I'll show you point-blank that once again, without debate, you couldn't be any more wrong than if you bet on the Ottawa Senators to win the Stanley Cup this year.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further debate?

Mr Bradley: I want to address just a few remarks to this particular piece of legislation, some of which I've already alluded to in my response to the member for Etobicoke West. I want to look first at the Ontario so-called Clean Water Agency and deal in a little more depth with what the real situation is in Ontario.

I listened to the Premier, with a lot of fanfare, make some announcement about long-term commitments, capital commitments. I happen to know, having had the pleasure and opportunity to be the Minister of the Environment for five years, three months and four days, that in fact we used to spend a lot more on water and sewer projects in years gone by.

The Premier made an announcement that was a multi-year announcement. In fact, he even alluded to some 10 years in terms of the capital commitment. I can tell you

that the amount of money they are spending year by year—if you go to the individual municipalities, they will certainly tell you this—on providing clean water, on providing necessary pollution control plants, is significantly diminished from what it used to be.

I met, along with the other members from the Niagara region, with the regional municipality of Niagara, which was looking back to the good old days when it used to be able to construct and improve sewage treatment plants and thereby improve the water quality in our part of the province. They find today that it's virtually impossible to get any money out of this government for projects of that kind. These are projects which are environmentally desirable, projects which are going to improve the ecology in all parts of this province and even beyond our borders, yet we're seeing a retrenchment in this regard.

I wouldn't mind so much if the Premier would concede that this was the case, but he endeavours to disguise it with some so-called multi-year commitment to capital funding, a commitment which, of course, can be abrogated at any point in time.

The Ontario Clean Water Agency, as it is termed in this particular legislation, is in fact what used to exist within the Ministry of the Environment. It has been my view consistently, not always a view which has prevailed over the years, that this should rest with the Ministry of the Environment. I can recall that during the last election campaign, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union had expressed great concern that this was going to be taken away from the Ministry of the Environment and placed in a separate agency.

I expressed the view that the agency, at the very least, should report to the Ministry of the Environment and I expressed the view within cabinet—and I can certainly share that with members of this House at this time—that in fact the entire responsibility should lie with the Ministry of the Environment, because the Ministry of Environment has, as its first obligation, a desire and a responsibility to protect the environment and not simply to allow for unfettered development across Ontario, often using up some of the best farm land and often using up land which was not suitable for development for various purposes. But the government has decided to embark upon this, the attractiveness being, as I've indicated in the past, that it can take this off the books and place it on some other books that don't show up on the government ledger.

This isn't something new. The member for Windsor-Riverside would remember W.A.C. Bennett, a gentleman who ruled British Columbia. I'm not talking about Bill Bennett Jr; I'm talking about his father.

1810

Hon Mr Cooke: What about Homes Now?

Mr Bradley: He used to take things off the provin-

cial debt, place them on provincial crown corporations and declare to everyone that he had a balanced budget and portrayed himself as a fiscal conservative when in fact he was anything but a fiscal conservative.

Hon Mr Cooke: Come on, Jim. Just answer the question. What about Homes Now and Bob Nixon?

Mr Bradley: I'm going to get the assistance of the Speaker in quieting down the member for Riverside, who is very exercised because I am revealing truths to him that he knows are absolutely impeccable in terms of the sources in the province that could confirm this.

So we have them doing all of these things which in effect are going to have a detrimental effect on the environment and of course are going to be a ruse in dealing with the people of Ontario.

I'm concerned, because I've looked at different corporations that are crown corporations, and members who are now on the government side, the member for Riverside who was elected at the same time I was, on June 9, 1977—I notice there was no celebration in this House that particular date. I think there was a row going on in the House that day and all that was put aside. But I want to congratulate him on his election in that particular election campaign. He succeeded in a heavily NDP seat and he's maintained that over the years.

He's a voice in cabinet that I would have thought would have been arguing against this, because in the past he was known, I think in his riding and in this House, as a person concerned about the environment, a person concerned that there would be unfettered development in Ontario and a person who was concerned that there should be accountability in terms of how things are shown on the books or in crown corporations.

He sat as well on committees that dealt with Ontario Hydro, and I must say that though I don't agree with everything that is happening at Ontario Hydro now, there are and have been for a number of years some developments which are quite positive in terms of accountability.

But what happens when you take this out of the Ministry of Environment, where it's accountable to the policy and priorities board of cabinet, the treasury board of cabinet, Management Board of Cabinet, all of the committees of cabinet where it's directly accountable? We've now put it off into a corner where it will not show on the books, so that Bob Rae, when he goes to the electorate at the very last day in 1995, if he can survive all the votes in the House with his dissenting members, when he goes at the very last minute, can say: "Look what we have done. We have taken all this debt away. We have reduced the deficit considerably." In fact, it will simply be a sign to other corporations—

Hon Mr Cooke: What about Homes Now and what Bob Nixon did?

Mr Bradley: The member keeps interrupting. For a

number of years he had a chance to ask the questions. Now he's got the limousine and the high salary, and I'm the one living on a meagre salary, with no limousine, who now gets a chance to ask the questions. If the member wishes to ask questions, I ask him to wait another two years and he might have that opportunity. He will be endeavouring to get a response out of me to those questions, maybe, if things happen to break that way.

I'm also concerned for my local school boards and also for the municipality because of the loan mechanism. In the past, the province used to assume that debt on its ledger. Now they're simply going to go to the Lincoln County Board of Education or the Lincoln County Roman Catholic Separate School Board and say, "If you want to construct some new schools or some new facilities, you can do the borrowing now and we will guarantee that money, and of course we will ensure that it is paid back," that is, the portion that used to come from the provincial government.

Well, that serves to place it clearly on the debt of the local organization instead of on the province, where it justifiably belongs, and it also places in jeopardy the individual boards of education and municipalities, which then have to take the word of the provincial government that somehow that money is going to be repaid.

I would suggest that one shouldn't always place that kind of faith in the fact that the provincial government will return that money, because this government has shown that it is prepared to renege on many of its commitments to municipalities, the Premier and the Treasurer would say because of changing economic circumstances.

So I worry about those local agencies, the boards of education, that have no doubt expressed some concerns directly to the government in this regard.

My colleagues have mentioned another problem which exists, the Ontario Realty Corp, and we've watched them selling things off left and right. A fire sale is called for and we see the assets being sold off. There's a bizarre case going on with GO Transit where they sell it to somebody and then lease it back.

I think people would rather have them be up front and say, "Yes, there is a considerable debt problem, yes, we are in the midst of a very difficult recession, and we have to do these things for the following purposes." But simply to shuffle them from one ledger to the other does not accomplish anything positive and it serves to be deceitful. I'm not making an accusation, but that's what comes out of it. It gives the idea of being deceitful to people. I think today people are prepared to see what's on the books, understand why the government's running a deficit; there are some people who are sympathetic to the fact that the government cannot now run a balanced budget. I must say, in the midst of a recession it is extremely difficult for a government to

run anything near a balanced budget, because the revenues are obviously not going to come in and many of the non-controllable expenditures continue to rise dramatically.

We can quarrel over the amount of the deficit; certainly, on this side of the House we are prepared to do that. We can quarrel over how to tackle it in the early stages so that it doesn't compound itself, and those debates have gone on in this House. But I think one thing we can agree upon is that these are difficult economic times and there's going to be some kind of deficit until such time as we get our economy going again, and that's going to be the key to getting out of this deficit situation. I don't think there's any advantage to, in the short term, moving figures from one column to another to try to give the appearance of fiscal responsibility.

I must say as well that I can't figure out why an NDP government is so obsessed with this particular issue. I would have thought that the NDP would have been obsessed with creating jobs, and I don't see in this particular bill, and I looked for this through most of the legislation, anything that would create new jobs in the province of Ontario. I know that has been a commitment in years gone by of the New Democratic Party who sat in opposition. If I wanted to talk to the people in my constituency on a daily basis, and I do, and ask them what the number one problem is that they're confronted with, it's lack of employment. It's the unemployment in the province, disadvantages that they have, and one of the reasons is that I have to come to Queen's Park and fight Tory policies at Queen's Park.

We had a meeting of our coalition, the Future of Hamilton-Niagara, a coalition we put together of labour and business and people from the community. I had to go to the meeting, and we were quarrelling one day over whether people, when they went to Ottawa to protest federal government policies, could carry the coalition signs, because they wanted to fight Tory policies. I said to them at the time, "Well, I don't feel any reluctance to take the signs to Queen's Park when I'm fighting the Tory policies of the Bob Rae government, so I don't think you people should have to worry about taking signs or taking buttons when you're fighting the Tory policies at Ottawa."

It's interesting to see. It must be difficult for some of the members opposite to be defending Tory policies. As the member for York Centre says, unfortunately, no matter how we vote in Ontario we seem to get a Tory government, and that's certainly what we have today, because the brothers and sisters who talk to me say, if you took the names away and put a blank face in and new names, you'd think you had a Tory government. Now, the present Tories think it perhaps doesn't go far enough, but they are close to Reform right now, my friends on the Tory side.

1820

Anyway, I don't think this bill is going to solve the problem. I don't think it's going to create new jobs. I think it's simply going to be a source of deception to the people of this province. I must say I'm particularly concerned about the so-called clean water agency, because I think that has the potential for directing development where it doesn't belong instead of having the Ministry of Environment and Energy determining what is the best environmental expenditure of dollars by the provincial government.

I can recall when being Minister of the Environment, when this was under the Ministry of the Environment, that it very carefully assessed, when putting out the money for various projects, what was most important environmentally. I had many of my own members who would come to me and would want a lot of money. Some, on a political basis, would say: "Look, we're the government. We should have it in our riding." I would say to them, "I'm sorry, but our ministry makes its determinations based on the environmental needs in the province: not on the political needs, not on the development needs, but on the environmental needs of this province."

I think when you take that out of the purview of the Ministry of Environment and place it in the purview of a non-accountable crown corporation, you're going to find, if not during your reign of office, because nothing seems to be happening in terms of job creation activity anyway, but in the future—and you have to remember the legacy that you leave for future governments, if you happen not to be re-elected. Certainly Alberta is some kind of indication that this might happen.

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): Come on now.

Mr Bradley: The member for Chatham-Kent suggests not, but I'll tell you, the people most happy with having Bob Rae and his government in Ontario were the leaders of the Conservative Party and Liberal Party in Alberta, who spent most of their time running against the government of Ontario, unfortunately in many cases, but that was nevertheless a fact.

I appeal, as I always do, to the good sense of individual members on the government side, because you have the majority, to go back to the caucus, to go back to the Premier, to talk to the people who have all of the power, and that is the people who reside in the Office of the Premier, who are the unelected people who don't have to go back to the constituents and face them on a daily or a weekly basis.

These are the people who always have the bright ideas in every government, but they do not have to talk to what I call the regular people on the street. What did Ed Broadbent used to call them? "The average Canadian." They don't have to speak to the average Canadian. They don't have to speak to Main Street.

I think it's important that we, as a Legislature, re-evaluate these bills. I call upon the open-minded members of the government to go to the minister, to go to the Premier and others and try to persuade them to either remove these bills or make significant alterations to them so that they are acceptable to all and will be beneficial to the province.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I thank the honourable member for St Catharines for his contribution to this debate and invite questions and/or comments. The member for Oakville South, for up to two minutes.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I just wanted to comment on the member's speech. As usual, I enjoyed listening to it. We've become friends over the last little while. Usually our discussions have revolved around, as we sit here in the back, sometimes with the member from St Catharines, what's happening with the Buffalo Sabres on a yearly basis.

But when you do sit down and listen to somebody like the member, who has experience in government as a cabinet minister in a major portfolio, you can see exactly why some of the ideas are coming forward. I appreciate that for the first time members on the other side do sit and listen when the member for St Catharines is speaking, because while there are some occasions when you may not always agree with what he's saying, I think in most instances he's trying to lay it out very clearly, as he did here today.

What we're attempting to say to all of you out there—I'm talking about on the other side now—is that we can't continue the route we are going now. If you look at the debt that we have had in this province over the last little while, we realize that something has to be done, but the answer is not in this bill.

The answer is not lopping the borrowing capacity on to other transfer partners at a time when we're criticizing the federal government for doing the same thing. Essentially on a daily basis, we hear about the federal government creating all the problems for the provincial government with transfers, and yet what you've done to your transfer partners has been worse.

Mr Winninger: What is the answer, Gary? What's your answer?

Mr Carr: Now that the borrowing capacity of the province is gone, through many different reasons, not the least of which—

Mr Mammoliti: What's the answer?

Mr Carr: Actually, you are kind of lucky, because you'll get an answer. I'm the next speaker and you'll get a half-hour of answers. But I do believe that the member offered some constructive answers to some of the concerns that we have, so I thank the member and I appreciate his input.

Mr Wiseman: I am very pleased to respond to the

member from St Catharines. A lot of the issues that he raised are very good issues and ones that I believe we have to take into consideration.

I agree with him that where you put a sewer pipe will really determine what kind of development you get. That has always greatly concerned me and that's a very valid point. It does lead to the exploitation and loss of prime agricultural land. I don't think there's anybody here who would doubt that I have a great concern for that.

One of the things about this water and sewer agency that I find appealing is that it does talk about the conservation of resources. It should move in that direction. A lot of the water treatment plants that are currently being built in this—particularly, I'll talk about the one in Ajax, building a water treatment plant in Ajax for \$70 million. But the point to be made here is that they don't need it. You could get the same amount of water capacity by doing something in the conservation area, by putting in toilet dividers or plungers.

I agree with him when he talks about being careful about where you spend the money. Unfortunately, the Ajax water treatment plant will not be part of the water and sewer agency because it's being done by the municipality. That's an important consideration to have in mind. I really feel the taxpayers in Durham who are going to pay for that water treatment plant are going to be paying out of their taxes. They don't need it. Water conservation would have accomplished the savings. Retrofits would have been a much better way to go.

The second thing is that this water and sewer agency will be directly related to the Ministry of Environment and Energy and you will not be able to hide the finances the way they are accusing us of.

Mr Offer: In the time available I'd like to take a few moments to underline much of what the member from St Catharines has said. I think it is clear that in his comments, which I know all were following very closely, he not only brought forward the salient aspects of the legislation, but also dealt with them in terms of how they relate to his constituents. I think the lesson is well told when we take a look at legislation in terms not only of how it appears here but of how it will impact outside of this place, in the community, throughout the province. The member has well done that.

There are concerns with this legislation. There are concerns with respect to what this legislation's tale will be. Will people be able to see the financial picture of the province in a clearer light or less than a clearer light after this legislation, and if this legislation is passed? I think it's becoming patently evident that this legislation may very well be used to move existing debt and future debt off the books of the treasury and on to the books of these particular capital corporations.

For that, there is an important lesson that has to be

told, and that is, how are the people in this province going to be able to truly, accurately ascertain the standing of the province in terms of its debt load, in terms of its need for fiscal restraint and responsibility? These corporations may in fact impede in a very real way the ability of the general public to ascertain the reality of the province's debt.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): The member for St Catharines missed one major point in his address, and for one who should be concerned about it, I would just like to ask why you didn't get into the business of the toll roads. Do you realize that the QEW, when you travel home along it—and you probably take the QEW to get back to good old St Catharines, which is a beautiful community—that some day you'll have a toll on that road, because what this government's done in this bill is leave the scope wide open that every road in the province of Ontario—

1830

Mr Wiseman: That's not true and you know it.

Mr Cousens: It is true. Oh, Durham West, Wiseman again, thinks he's got the answers. He doesn't have any control over his lips or his head. If it rattles, you can hear it a mile away.

My point is that the QEW or any road that's already built in the province of Ontario can become a toll road—not just new roads, any road—and the government is leaving the scope wide open to this new agency to tax us another way. They have taxed us enough as it is through gas taxes, we know that, and now they're in the process of putting legislation in place that makes for this agency to have the right to make any road a toll road.

I'm opposed to that and I think there should be some integrity on the part of the government to face up to it. In all their press releases, they've said, "Oh, well, we want the right to be able to levy a toll on new roads," and the people up our way, for Highway 407, are willing to accept that as possibly a reasonable way of paying for a highway and accelerating the construction of it.

But to come along within this bill and have the right to implement and institute tolls on any road in the province—and by the way, that might be a very clever way on the part of the New Democrats, because then they'll use that money to pay for other things. Who knows whether it will go to better roads or new roads, but they'll use it as a source of revenue.

They're thieves. We've seen that in the last while when they came out with the heavy taxes, \$2 billion a year this year and more taxes, and that's all these road tolls are, just another tax on the people of Ontario. Would you comment on that, St Catharines?

The Speaker: The member for St Catharines has up to two minutes to respond.

Mr Bradley: I am pleased to respond, in the limited two minutes that I have, to the various points that have been made. The member for Oakville South, who members of this House should know was a very capable professional hockey player in his day, a very good goaltender—a lot of people don't know that, but he certainly was that—is a person who understands the need for accountability. I appreciate the remarks from the member for Oakville South, again underlining the need for accountability and where that accountability can best be reached.

The member for Durham West, I thought, offered a good suggestion in terms of conservation. We always have had the feeling, in years gone by, that somehow if we built something bigger, it was automatically better, and we are finding, part of it because of economic circumstance but part of it because of new thinking which is sweeping the world, that in fact conservation can achieve a lot of this as well.

For instance, I know of shower heads that can limit the amount of water coming out. I know that a good example is toilets. We have five-gallon toilets in so many cases, that have too large a flush. Very simply, we can reduce the amount of water with each flush and avoid the need for huge new plants.

The member for Mississauga North talked about accountability and why it is best to place the accountability where it is most visible.

Last, the member for Markham did raise the issue of toll roads. One doesn't have the time to address all of these. I am concerned. I am opposed to toll roads, first of all, anywhere in the province, but second, I become concerned that the money will not be used for those purposes. Every tax I've ever seen, every toll I've ever seen, every levy I've ever seen goes into the consolidated revenue fund and does not go anywhere else. I've always contended that you're never going to see those kinds of designated taxes.

I appreciate the remarks of each of the members and look forward to further debate on this legislation.

The Speaker: Is there further debate? I recognize the honourable member for Oakville South.

Mr Carr: I'm pleased to add a few thoughts on this bill. I think what I'll do in a nutshell is try to tell you what my feeling is of this bill, and then I want to get a little bit into what I propose to do and where our debt is.

Essentially, as we all know, the federal government is now bankrupt. Our debt now is about—

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Morally, intellectually.

Mr Carr: I'm going to get into that and I will say this: I'm not going to apportion any blame, even on our deficit here, to any political parties. We can get into long debates of whose fault it is—it's Trudeau's, it's

Mulroney's—but I'm not going to do that, but I wanted to let you know where we're at, because I believe that's fundamental to this bill.

The accumulated deficit now works out to be, and I'm going to divide it up—the federal deficit works out to be about \$15,000 for every man, woman and child if you take the total debt and divide it by the number of people in this country. Provincially, as you know, we've had many debates on where the deficit is heading. The Premier says that a lot of what we have in the social contract needs to be done because the deficit was heading towards \$120 billion. If you look at it that way, you can see that we're heading towards about \$12,000 for every man, woman and child. We're not there yet. We're probably close to around \$7,000.

If you combine those two totals, we are now facing, for every man, woman and child in this province, about \$22,000 worth of debt, and as a result of that we are now in the situation where quite frankly, people don't want to lend us money in this country. Again, I'm not going to apportion any blame as to whose fault it is, at the federal level or the provincial level, but suffice it to say, we are in one heck of a financial crisis.

I might add that this debt doesn't include that deficit that I talked about on a per-person basis, because I think, quite frankly, when you look at it, people are saying, "Well, what is the debt total?" and we're talking of \$400 billion and \$120 billion.

People can't realistically look at it. But I look at it in my own terms, taking the total number of debt, per-person basis, \$22,000 for every man, woman and child in this province, federal and provincial. I look at my family—I have three kids; married, three kids, there's five of us—and the accumulated total of our debt is well over \$100,000. We owe more to the provincial and the federal governments as a family than we do to the people who own the mortgage on our home. That's the financial crisis we are in in this province and in this country.

I say to my friends across the way, that doesn't even include Ontario Hydro's debt, which is about \$35 billion. Quite frankly, that's the reason they got in the situation they are with having to cut back, not because all of a sudden Bob Rae or Maurice Strong or even Marc Eliesen thought it was a great idea.

The problem is that they needed to go to the market to borrow money, and when they went out there to the bondholders, they said, "We're not going to lend you money," because what happens is that when that bond comes due, somebody has to pick up the bonds and buy them. People say: "Well, you shouldn't worry about the bondholders. They're running this province." The fact of the matter is that they're the ones who have the money. If they don't invest in the bonds, what do we do? The cheques bounce.

All of what we're talking about in Ontario Hydro is a result of the financial mismanagement that's gone on. Again, I'm not going to apportion any blame, but it's now at \$35 billion.

It doesn't include the unfunded liability of WCB, which, I say to my friends opposite, is now \$12 billion. Billion: When I'm talking, some people think I'm talking million; I'm talking billion. It goes up \$100 million a month; \$100 million a month it goes up. So next year when we have this debate over whether we were right about this corporation or not, it's going to be up.

The problem is that from an international standpoint, the people who own the money, and I know my friend from Durham had this debate during the pre-budget hearings, the worst part is that most of our debt is owed to foreigners. Most of our debt is owed to people in other countries, who have an option. They have an option where to put their money. It's the Japanese, the West German, the French, the Americans who own the debt. They're the ones who own the bonds, and when they come due, they're the ones we have to pay back, and quite frankly, they very easily can move their bonds.

The people who sell the bonds, if somebody is in Japan and an offering comes due, they don't need to buy Ontario bonds, whether it's Ontario Hydro or the government or the government of Canada's bonds. The financial situation of many of the provinces is even worse. As you know, for Saskatchewan and Newfoundland, and maybe some of you don't know, their credit ratings are one step above junk bond status because of the financial crisis that we're in. Again, I'm saying this not in a partisan way, because we can blame it on whomever in all of those provinces, but the facts are we are broke.

The government, in its wisdom, says, "Well, who has the borrowing capacity?" They look at municipalities, which have a lot of assets. What this bill has done is it has said: "They have some borrowing capacity, so let's use it. We're not content with having the federal government bankrupt. We're not content with having the provincial government bankrupt." We are now going to get into a situation, when you read this bill, where municipalities are going to be on the hook for this.

The people in municipalities in the past, the ratepayers and the taxpayers out there, have been very lucky in a way, because municipalities haven't been able to run up debts. I suspect that had they, whether a politician's of any political stripe municipally, they probably would have, but through the OMB and various other functions, they've had to be restrained in the amount of borrowing. This lets them override that.

As the member from Windsor said, the Education minister, they think there's going to be a corporation out there that's going to borrow. Where this money's

going to come from is that the provincial government, which is now giving it to them in terms of grants, is now going to ask them to use their borrowing capacity to pay for things the province used to pay for.

When I talk to people in education and municipalities over this, the reason there isn't as much excitement is quite frankly we're in the middle of one crisis with the whole social contract and most of them, whether they're trustees or municipal officials, really haven't had time to let this Bill 17 sink in.

But when they do, I think they're going to be as frightened and as discouraged as we on this side of the House are. Some of them may like the additional borrowing capacity, but I think the taxpayers and the people of this province will say that we should not be going down a road which we have gone down which has created chaos federally and provincially.

1840

What I did, going way back in February of this year after we had our pre-budget hearings, is I talked about that very question in our minority report. We talked about what we should be doing with a clear set of books, and that's why we're so discouraged with this bill, because we talked at length, as did many of the presenters, about having a clear set of books. All this will do is allow the government to push off a number of employees and the total amount of debt on to a corporation which they hope the people won't see. They've attempted to do this in the past.

We've attempted to break the spending down. We call it capital spending versus operating and we divide it into two in hopes that it will confuse the people, and the deficit, which is \$10 billion, will now become only \$6 billion on the operating side because we're spending \$3 billion on the capital.

I say to my friend from Yorkview, the ironic thing is that in the last budget, if you look at it, this government broke out capital spending going way back into the early 1980s, and during that period of time we were spending, on a capital basis, about \$3.5 billion on capital. That's all we're spending this year. So in other words, in the early 1980s we were spending as much on capital. That's why we get a little excited when the member for Yorkview says we aren't building any infrastructure. He obviously hasn't driven on any of the new highways, the 403; he hasn't been to the new schools that have been built.

We had more capital construction during that period of the 1980s when we were building our infrastructure, and I say again—and I don't say this to take credit for the government of the day, which was Conservative, because it made many mistakes. But when you break it down, we were spending more on capital, and we did have a deficit during that period of time.

Almost to a person we've had complaints about how

bad the deficit was under the Conservative government, but when you look at it—and I'm glad the government, at least in this area, broke down the capital spending in those early years—from an operating standpoint, the deficit was only about \$600 million in the early 1980s. That was during a recession, when many of the pressures were on for social programs and so on. Most of the debt came in terms of the capital.

In other words, what I'm getting at is, during that period of time the spending that was there—and I might add the total was about \$25 billion, or about half of what it is today—during that period of time we were spending almost as much on capital and the infrastructure in this province as we are today. Now, I'm excluding the government's new introduction of the \$6-billion fund on capital, but on an operating basis we only had about a \$600-million deficit. We were putting the money in those days into the infrastructure: into the roads and the schools and the hospitals.

Today the ironic thing is, with close to \$55 billion—although with the cuts coming through we obviously won't hit that; that was the old projected number—we are not building the infrastructure, and the reason we can't is we couldn't afford it. So some bureaucrat or some policy person way up said: "We've got an idea. We'll just hide it. We'll just spin it off into corporations and we will take as many corporations as it takes. We'll take the realty corporation, we'll take the transportation corporation, the clean water agency, and then we'll get this big umbrella, the Ontario Financing Authority, to oversee it and build another big bureaucracy" at a time when we should be looking at how we are going to scale back the operating costs in this province.

In other words, what we've done over the last 10 years is spend more and more on the operating side and less and less on capital, and I think certainly we're paying for it. It doesn't happen right away, but we are now seeing the deterioration of our roads, our schools, our hospitals. Most of the people that are members of this Legislature, the MPPs that are from high-growth areas, know what has happened with portables, the absolute explosion of portables in this province, and there is not enough money in the treasury to get rid of those portables right now.

What the government has said is, "We'll give more of the borrowing capacity to the municipalities, to the school boards, and they can borrow," which quite frankly scares me, because the responsibility for getting in debt in this country had only been the federal and the provincial governments' and we're seeing how poorly both of those institutions handled it. Now we're going to give more borrowing capacity to the municipalities and the school boards.

There are some in that area who like it, because they're saying: "Without it, we're going to get nothing.

What the heck? We may as well run it up a little bit, because we're going to get nothing in terms of grants." I think that's a fair assumption. That's why, in our minority report, we talked about putting a clear set of books together. We spent about a page and a half talking about what we should be doing, because the general feeling was that governments of the day—again I say this in a non-partisan way—both the present government, the NDP, as well as Liberals and Conservatives, have attempted to hide what is actually happening with the books. Our unfunded liabilities at WCB and our great debt with Ontario Hydro continue to rise up.

Now we're in the situation where we're in trouble. We have no more capacity to borrow, so the government in its wisdom says, "We're going to come up with this act to provide for the capital investment plan," which, quite frankly, when some of the members get a chance to read through it, is a very scary piece of legislation. It gives a tremendous amount of power. It gives the power to override the Education Act.

For those members who want to follow along closely on page 26 of the bill, because it is a fairly long bill, it talks about that, and I'll read it out. It talks about the "sale of debentures would not cause the school board to exceed the limit prescribed under clause 235.3(1)(b) of the Education Act."

That's why that was put in there. It was put in there so that school boards and, in the same way, municipalities could not run up debts that would have to be paid. It was only the provincial and the federal governments that were allowed to do that. Now we're saying there are no controls in place. You're going to be able to run up the debt. There's going to be no appeal process. Nobody's going to look at it. We've got this agency that's out of control.

Quite frankly, when that happens, there's going to be nobody within the government who's going to be able to get a handle on it, because we're going to see, as we've seen many times here with the WCB and other things, "That's another corporation." We hear that with Ontario Hydro: "That's Ontario Hydro. We can't do anything other than appoint the chairperson. Other than that, it's hands off." But, quite frankly, if one is to look at the bill, these are going to be the most substantial changes that we've seen in the management of the finances of capital in this province's history.

I'm amazed that there has not been as much criticism of the government over it, but I think one of the reasons is that the municipalities, school boards, a lot of the people out there, are saying, with the crisis going on with the social contract: "We're not even thinking about how we're going to fund capital next year. We're trying to worry about how we're going to lay off teachers, how we're going to lay off municipalities. Are we going to have to roll back their wages? To heck with how

we're going to finance things. Don't give us those details. We're worried by July 1 what happens, when we get our \$225 million, our \$450 million."

I think that's one of the reasons there has not been as much criticism of this government, because the people who are out there in the know, the people on municipalities and school boards, are too worried about what is happening tomorrow, let alone what happens when this bill comes in, because we won't feel it.

I know the member for Scarborough talked about what may or may not happen. The fact of the matter is, it won't be until we're down the road when we have the problems, and it's going to be too late then. We're going to end up as we did, and many of us on even this side of the House were shocked when we take a look at what happened to Ontario Hydro. How did that get out of control? There were no controls in place.

Mr Winninger: It started under Tory governments.

Mr Carr: Yes, and I said that earlier. We're not being partisan, whether it was \$35 billion. I look at Ontario Hydro and say, yes, it needed to be done. Now what do we do to fix it? We weren't up that high when we were in and we can blame the Liberals during that period of time, but you see very clearly how the management of our resources can get out of control when you give corporations the power, without the elected officials having the power to be booted out.

Maybe if Ontario Hydro had been under the government, whoever's fault it was, going way back, would have been able to be booted out on that issue, but they were not, just like this government is going to be booted out because of its management and its overspending and its \$10-billion deficits, which are now ingrained. But with Ontario Hydro, with WCB, these unfunded liabilities and these debts are racking up and there is no accountability within the system.

I think most politicians of all political stripes believe one thing. Regardless of whether you're with the NDP or the Liberals or Conservatives, I think we all believe in the provisions of accountability of the elected people. This is taking it away. It's putting over on to other corporations which, quite frankly, scares us.

I don't think we're going to see very much increase in the amount of spending being done in these agencies, because when people realize that the circumstances are that the municipalities are going to be on the hook and school boards are going to be on the hook, I just wonder how much borrowing capacity we're going to get out of these particular new corporations that have been put forward.

1850

We have presented a couple of our thoughts on the bill. If you look at the midterm financial plan of the government, it will move an increasing portion of the capital spending and debt off to these new corporations.

I think that's what's behind the whole premise of this bill. The fact of the matter is that the ironic thing is that the people who write the bonds, the people who buy the bonds and the people who have to sell the bonds look at the entire picture. They lop Ontario Hydro and the unfunded liability of the WCB in with the government right now. You're not going to fool the people who are paying the bonds and who are buying the bonds with this smoke-and-mirrors act. It's going to go up. We're going to have \$800 million in 1993-94. It's going to go to \$1.2 billion in 1994-95 and \$1.7 billion in 1995-96.

The government claims in a lot of its speeches that the crown corporations offer a number of advantages as compared to the government ministries in managing and financing capital works. That's interesting, how they feel that way. They call it a more focused mandate, more flexible, the ability to forge new partnerships with business and the private sector. That's interesting, how they believe there would be better partnership with an arm's-length agency than there is with the government. I suspect that in that regard they may be right, because with the way they've treated their transfer partners, maybe an arm's-length corporation will be best.

The corporations will be able to maintain accounts external to the consolidated revenue fund, but the Minister of Finance can appropriate surplus funds from the corporations for the consolidated revenue fund.

We aren't getting to the real root of how we're going to finance our infrastructure, which in the long term will create jobs. All we're doing with this particular piece of legislation is, "How are we going to hide it for the folks out in the province of Ontario so they don't see where our money is going to?" The ironic thing is that when people look at this and say, "What does that mean to me in terms of jobs?" there's nothing in here that's going to increase the infrastructure, that will allow businesses to say, "Hey, this is a good place to invest."

Our roads are deteriorating. In the past we used to fund our roads with our gasoline tax, but all that has been taken away to go to general revenue funds. Quite frankly, I think a lot of people would say that if you were going to use money to build a road, you should use the revenue from the gasoline tax. Every time there's an increase, we say, "That's why we're doing it. We're increasing the gasoline tax"—and, again, I say this in a non-partisan way, going back to the Liberals and Conservatives and NDP—"to replace the infrastructure of our roads." But I look back and I see that really, for the size of the economy, it was only going back to the 1970s and the 1980s where there was any major—and quite frankly even going back further, to the 1960s—infrastructure and capital development.

That was a good thing. I shudder to think where we would be in this country had Ontario Hydro—I know my friends across shout about Ontario Hydro. You think of where we would have been if we did not have the

foresight to set up Ontario Hydro, going way back to Leslie Frost, who wasn't looking to the short term. He was looking to the long term, the vision of where we need to be. What he did as Premier didn't really come about in a lot of areas until 20 years later, because Ontario Hydro was set up and developed.

You can argue that it got out of control and you can blame the last Conservative, Liberal or NDP government, whoever you want. The fact of the matter is that the corporation was set up and basically got out of control because of the fact that there was very little control by the provincial government.

Bill 17 is going to enable the government to run up debt that would not be reflected on its own books. This was troublesome during the most recent years, because we saw what happens. We're at ingrained \$10-billion deficits every year. Now they're going to attempt to get it down. I wouldn't even mind so much if we were going to have \$10 billion moved and have \$5 billion in the corporations and \$5 billion in the government, but I know what's going to happen with this government. They seem to be stuck around the \$10 billion. All that's going to happen is they're going to move \$5 billion over to the corporations and still keep it at \$10 billion.

I wouldn't be as concerned if I thought it would be the total amount of debt going out there that you would accumulate. But I know that the Premier and the Minister of Finance seem to be stuck on \$10 billion and I am afraid that what we're going to see over the next few years is \$10 billion regardless. Whether it takes cuts, whatever it will be, it will be \$10 billion. When we move \$2 billion, \$3 billion, \$4 billion, whatever it turns out over the next few years, we're going to still have \$10 billion on the government's books. I think that is the reason they're attempting to do it, so they can stick the public with the figures. I don't think even \$10 billion is acceptable.

For those members who are interested in my minority report that was put together—I know all members got a copy of the entire report, which is about an inch thick—the PC minority report which outlines about 15 points of what we should be doing in the province, it is available, if you would like it. Or you can look at the big report where it's an appendage in the back.

One of the things we put in there is a clear set of books. What we said was, "The Ministry of Finance should commission an independent party to prepare an analysis of the cost and benefits of converting to accrual accounting, to provide an opinion as to whether such a conversion would result in more comprehensive"—because these are the big points that we would like to see in any financial book—"understandable, accessible and realistic description of the assets and liabilities of the province...."

I know the members have all had a chance to look at the minority report, but if they look at the appendage

which was our report, we said that here are some principles of what we believe. It should be a "comprehensive, understandable, accessible and realistic description of the assets and liabilities," not what's in Bill 17, not by pushing it on to another corporation where you hope to hide it.

We believe in giving "an estimate of the dollar cost involved in making such a conversion and that this analysis should be tabled in the Legislature and referred to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs," because I will say about that committee that over the pre-budget hearings, believe it or not, there was a tremendous amount of cooperation.

I say to my friend from Durham, and he will remember this, that there was a great deal of cooperation from all members, saying: "We have a financial crisis. We're not here just to criticize. We're going to put some concrete proposals together." There was some agreement on what we should be doing. We didn't come to a consensus; hence the fact we had to do a minority report.

But we talk about some of the problems of the debt. I just want to give you a couple. I'll read it out and I won't name the people who were in. Actually it's on here. It's the Ontario Natural Gas Association. This is what they said:

"Canada and Ontario have a critical problem with public debt, one which will take strong actions to resolve. Sustained economic growth will not be achieved without substantial progress in reducing the debt burden. Moreover, even an average economic performance over the longer term will not in itself resolve the deficit/debt problem."

I think this government heard some of the people who presented. Instead of dealing with the debt, they decided to put this bill together now, to push it off into another corporation so they can hide it in hopes that the people who are now saying, "When the bonds come due, we're not going to buy Ontario bonds because of the financial situation in the province"—I think it's foolish. I think they will regret it in the long run.

Some of the other comments that were made during that particular debate I think were very forceful and very powerful. People want to know the truth. You will get more out of your social contract talks if people realize where we're at. I know, even talking about the social contract, nobody knew during that period where our debt is. I remember watching some of the people come out, the Liz Barkleys and the Sid Ryans, saying: "We don't believe the government. We don't believe we're heading to \$120 billion."

What do we do? We put in another corporation so no one will know. We won't know what's happening out there because it won't be on the government's books. When you make the tough choices they'll say: "It's

really not that bad. The debt's not that bad because we've just lopped \$5 billion over to the new corporations and our deficit has gone down."

I know that the member from the Liberal Party is ready to speak next, so I won't take too much time. I think he's looking at me, wondering why I took so much time as it was. I think I promised him a little bit shorter period of time.

If you look over the next little while, I believe honestly, truly, that when you get a chance to read this bill, you are going to be concerned with what is happening. I don't think that the municipalities and the school boards are going to like this. I think they're going to be appalled when they realize that a lot of the things they thought of in terms of the transfers are now going to be basically thrust upon them in terms of debt.

It's going to be scary, it's bad for the taxpayer and I hope the members will take a look at it because I honestly, truly believe that we're going to live to regret this. There are many things we can do in this province to straighten out the financial mess. This is not one of them.

1900

The Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Oakville South for his contribution to this debate and invite any questions and/or comments.

Seeing none, is there further debate? There were no questions or comments, so there's no reply. I recognize the member for Mississauga North.

Mr Offer: Let me say that I have been looking forward to taking part in this debate on this particular piece of legislation.

I've spoken during the two-minute wrapups after some members have spoken; and some of the points that I wanted to make on this legislation, I have made in that time spot. However, I would like to speak in generalities about the legislation and I will tell you why.

I believe this is a piece of legislation which requires some real in-depth examination. I understand and hope that this is a piece of legislation which will be going to a committee. I believe there are many people who want to talk about the legislation, the creation of these particular capital corporations, the concerns that they have, how they can be used, and in what manner they are going to be used.

I know that as I walk through my constituency, a great many people, though their first concern is always jobs, the security of their existing jobs and the creation of new jobs, do have a real concern about debt; they have a real concern about the need for restraint. What they are concerned about is being able to ascertain the debt position and the deficit position of the government at any particular point in time, and traditionally people have looked towards the budget in order to ascertain those answers.

How I see this legislation unfolding is that there will be the creation of certain capital corporations which will, without any question, move some of the debt, and I believe over time it could be quite substantial, off the books of the province to these particular corporations, where these corporations will be incurring debt, which of course in the end result will be in part largely financed by taxpayers. But the taxpayers of the province will not be able, as easily and readily, to ascertain what is the current fiscal position of the province.

That's a concern I have with respect to these particular capital corporations. I have a concern as to how these particular corporations may be used in the educational field. Coming from Mississauga, I think it's clear that we are in a growth area in the region of Peel. We have the Peel Board of Education, which I believe is the largest public board of education in the country. We have the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board which, if not the largest, is certainly extremely large and ranks as one of the largest, and both boards are continually growing.

There is the need for the building of schools for accommodating new growth, for additions to facilities. What I am concerned about with this particular piece of legislation is how it may affect and impact upon the boards of education in the area that I represent.

They have, through some comments, indicated some concerns they have with respect to how the legislation will potentially impact upon them. What guarantees are there in the legislation that the government will be able to continue to fully guarantee the debt obligation which they will incur on behalf of the government? You see, what this legislation will do is in the area of capital construction. In the past, the government has provided funds to boards of education. Those funds show up as a debt of the province. Under this legislation, it will enable the boards to borrow money, to be repaid or guaranteed back by the government.

In essence, it's a transference of debt from the province to the local boards, and the concern that I have is the guarantee that the debt that is incurred, with the approval of the province, will in fact be fully guaranteed and repaid by the province. This is a significant concern, especially in a growth area where we have very large boards that require a great deal of capital infusion into the areas because of the many people who are moving into areas such as the Peel region.

So my concern on this legislation is, firstly, that it does require some significant examination: examination as to how these particular corporations are going to be created, their purpose, their impact and how the control is going to be maintained by the government of the day. That is why I understand it will be going to committee, and I think it's absolutely essential that these particular questions be answered.

Also, I have as a secondary concern the fact that the

debt of the province, the deficit of the province, will not be as clearly and readily ascertained by the taxpayers of the province because of this shifting of debt off-book. I think that there is some work that has to be done in making certain that taxpayers, that the residents of this province, will always have the availability at hand to ascertain what is the position the province has, because it is that position which in many ways dictates the type of service the government can provide and dictates the type of tax increases governments are going to incur and impose upon their citizens.

I look forward to this particular piece of legislation receiving a very thorough examination as it proceeds through this legislative process, and meeting some of the concerns of the people in my area, and certainly with respect to some of the concerns in some of the more significant growth boards, the Peel Board of Education and the Dufferin-Peel board of education, of course an area of which I have some representation, some responsibility for.

The Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Mississauga North for his contribution to the debate and invite questions and/or comments. Seeing none, is there further debate? If not, I recognize the member for Scarborough Centre for his wrap-up on the bill.

Mr Owens: We've had a good level of debate over the last number of hours, and I thank the members for their participation. In terms of the issues that have been raised, they have been numerous in number. However, I would like to say that we have heard support for the major purposes of the act with respect to sustained and accelerated capital investment.

In terms of some of the issues with respect to job creation, this is clearly a vehicle for job creation in times of need like this that provides for the building of strategic infrastructure and improvements on existing infrastructure. This is clearly crucial to our overall competitiveness. The act is important, and it's an important vehicle for the delivering on our investment in job creation commitments.

I think one of the things that concerns me is clearly the lack of understanding with respect to accountability

coming from the other side. I think if one reads the legislation, clearly the messages with respect to accountability are clear and present.

In terms of how the capital corporations will be functioning, unlike some of the corporations that have been mentioned—and clearly there's no relationship between the kind of corporation that Ontario Hydro is and these new capital corporations—these corporations will be transparent and accountable to the government of Ontario. The government will maintain the policy formulation functions and the capital corporations will be a method to implement that policy.

In closing, I want to again thank members. I look forward to debating this issue in the finance and economics committee. I think this is a good piece of legislation. It's an omnibus piece of legislation that will provide for new and improved methods of capital financing in the province of Ontario.

The Speaker: In the absence of the Minister of Finance, the member for Scarborough Centre moves second reading of Bill 17. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Mr Owens: I would like to refer the bill to the finance and economics committee.

The Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Hon Fred Wilson (Chief Government Whip): I'd like to announce the business for tomorrow. It will be the debate on second reading of Bill 48. I move adjournment of the House.

The Speaker: The government whip moves adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried. This House stands adjourned until 10 of the clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1912.

ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
32A	1379	2	25	CARROUSEL OF THE NATIONS
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32A	Contents	1	6	Carrousel of the Nations

CONTENTS

Wednesday 16 June 1993

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Social contract

Mr Sorbara	1479
Mr McLean	1479
Mrs Caplan	1480
Mr Wood	1481

Ride for Sight

Mr Cooper	1479
-----------	------

Compensation for AIDS patients

Mrs Sullivan	1479
--------------	------

Endangered species

Mr Harnick	1480
------------	------

International trade

Mrs MacKinnon	1480
---------------	------

Agricultural land

Mr Jim Wilson	1481
---------------	------

Highway safety

Mr Ferguson	1481
-------------	------

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

AND RESPONSES

Mental health reform

Mrs Grier	1482
Mrs Sullivan	1483
Mr Jim Wilson	1484
Mr Daigeler	1485

Native information services

Ms Swarbrick	1483
Mr O'Neil	1484
Mr Arnott	1484

Ministerial statements

Mr Mahoney	1485
Ms Swarbrick	1486
Mr Eves	1486
The Speaker	1486

ORAL QUESTIONS

Social contract

Mrs McLeod	1487
Mr Rae	1487, 1489, 1493
Mr Harris	1489, 1493
Mr Mahoney	1492
Mr Mackenzie	1492

Health care

Mrs McLeod	1488
Mrs Grier	1488

Tax increases

Mr Cousens	1491
Mr Rae	1491

Bicycling policy

Mr Frankford	1494
Mr Pouliot	1494

Post-secondary education

Mr McGuinty	1494
Mr Cooke	1494

Employment equity

Mrs Witmer	1495
Ms Ziemba	1495

Heritage legislation

Mr Malkowski	1496
Ms Swarbrick	1496

Investment in Ontario

Mr Kwinter	1496
Ms Lankin	1496
Mrs Sullivan	1497

PETITIONS

Automobile insurance

Mr Cleary	1498
Mr White	1499
Mr Carr	1499
Mr Mahoney	1499
Mrs Marland	1501
Mr Henderson	1501

Endangered species

Mr Harnick	1498
------------	------

Gambling

Mr Wiseman	1499
Ms Harrington	1500
Mr Carr	1500
Mr Frankford	1501
Mr Henderson	1501

Ontario Film Review Board

Mrs Marland	1499
-------------	------

Madawaska Highlands

Mr Conway	1500
-----------	------

International trade

Mr White	1500
----------	------

Closure of agricultural college

Mr Ramsay	1500
-----------	------

Public service employees

Mr Runciman	1500
-------------	------

Abortion

Mr Cleary	1501
-----------	------

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

Standing committee on resources development

Mr Huget	1502
----------	------

Standing committee on regulations and private bills

Ms Haeck	1502
----------	------

Standing committee on government agencies

Mrs Marland	1502
-------------	------

FIRST READINGS

Legislative Assembly Retirement

Allowances Amendment Act, 1993,	
Bill 52	

Mr Kormos	1502
-----------	------

Hellenic Orthodox Community of Kingston and District Act, 1993,

Bill Pr42	
Mr Gary Wilson	1502

SECOND READINGS

Retail Business Holidays Amendment Act, 1993 (Sunday Shopping),

Bill 38	
---------	--

Mr Charlton	1502
-------------	------

Mr Mahoney	1503
------------	------

Mr Eves	1503
---------	------

Employment Equity Act, 1993, Bill 79

Ms Ziemba	1504, 1509
-----------	------------

Mr Curling	1508
------------	------

Mr Owens	1509
----------	------

Capital Investment Plan Act, 1993,

Bill 17	
---------	--

Mr Daigeler	1509, 1514
-------------	------------

Mr Mammoliti	1513
--------------	------

Mr Offer	1513, 1530
----------	------------

Mr Owens	1513, 1531
----------	------------

Mr Curling	1514
------------	------

Mr Stockwell	1514, 1520
--------------	------------

Mr Perruzza	1518
-------------	------

Mr Bradley	1519, 1520, 1525
------------	------------------

Mr Turnbull	1519
-------------	------

Mr Carr	1523, 1525
---------	------------

Mr Wiseman	1523
------------	------

Mr Cousens	1524
------------	------

OTHER BUSINESS

Visitor

The Speaker	1482
-------------	------

Order of business

Mr Eves	1497
---------	------

Mr Charlton	1497
-------------	------

Mr Mahoney	1498
------------	------

The Speaker	1498, 1501
-------------	------------

Errata	1531
--------	------

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 16 juin 1993

PÉTITIONS

Contrat social

M. Poirier	1499
------------	------

24207
81
-123

No. 34A



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Thursday 17 June 1993

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Jeudi 17 juin 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
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Thursday 17 June 1993

The House met at 1001.

Prayers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

Mr Murdoch moved private member's notice of motion number 14:

That, in the opinion of this House, since the conservation land tax rebate has been cancelled making it impossible for some conservation authorities to pay their taxes; and

Since the government is asking conservation authorities to accept funding cuts which are far more severe than those foisted on other sectors of society; and

Since the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario have offered A Blueprint for Success which would save Ontario taxpayers an estimated \$100 million; and

Since the future of our wetlands, floodplains and conservation areas are threatened by this government's fiscal mismanagement;

Therefore, the conservation land tax rebate should be immediately reinstated to conservation authorities and the government should seriously consider and implement the concepts outlined in the Blueprint for Success.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I am presenting this resolution to the House today because I'm very concerned about the difficult situation we find our conservation authorities in. This government has cut their operating funds by more than those in other sectors, and they are being asked to sacrifice in addition to eliminating the conservation land tax rebate for public land.

The people of Ontario are worried now about their environmentally sensitive lands. They are afraid that they may have to be sold if there is no money to pay the taxes.

To show Bob Rae and his Minister of Natural Resources that they are serious, a lot of people from my area have come down here today to show their support for this resolution. They want to support their conservation authorities, for the wetlands and the floodplains, the parks and the forests, which they believe the government is abandoning.

We have a lot of people sitting in the gallery, both here and up there, from my area. We have people from the conservation authorities, from the field naturalists, a lot of representatives from municipalities, chambers of commerce, a lot of sportsmen's clubs, heritage and other groups from my area that are very concerned that if we

continue in this way, downloading on to our conservation authorities and on to our municipalities, there will be no land left for people to enjoy and the sensitive areas will be sold to private developers, and that would be unfair.

I share a number of their concerns also. I believe that what we can do is protect this land for the environment, and there is a way of doing it. My own area has been very lucky to have a lot of this land bought up and looked after by the conservation authorities, but the problem is that this government now has reneged on a promise that was made for many years by other governments, that they would pay the conservation land tax.

What this is going to do is force some of the municipalities to sell some of this land. As you know, in the private sector, if you fall behind in paying your tax bill, after three years the municipalities can and may sell the land to pay the taxes.

We have the same situation happening here. For many years the conservation authorities all over Ontario have gone out and with the help of the government and with the help of many individuals bought a lot of this land to protect, as I said, land such as wetlands and lands of significant interest, lands that all the people in Ontario would like to enjoy. Therefore, the wisdom of the past governments was that all the people in Ontario should pay the taxes on it. Well, something's happened. This government decided that, no, the local people are going to have to pick up the tax bill, and it's straight downloading.

I see in the audience Mr Kirk, who is sitting up there, who in our area is called Mr Conservationist. This man has spent most of his whole life collecting land, looking after land that is sensitive and should be enjoyed by everyone and should be protected for everyone. As I said, he's spent most of his life doing this and working towards that.

He's gone to many different clubs all over and asked them to donate land, donate money and put it into the land of the conservation authority, because as you know, the conservation authority is a group that is managed through the Ministry of Natural Resources of the province and it paid the land tax. But all of a sudden, without any consultation, this government decides, "Hey, we're not going to pay that tax any more."

What does the conservation authority do? They only have two people they can collect money from, and one is the province and the other is the municipality. They owe the taxes to the municipality, so they can't go to the municipality for any more money. We have a problem and that is why this resolution is here today.

I want to stress that Mr Kirk also worked to get a lot of the land along the Niagara Escarpment put into the conservation authorities. In my area, the Niagara Escarpment winds through pretty well over half of Grey county and we're proud to have the escarpment in Grey county. There may be some other things we're not proud of with the escarpment but we won't discuss those today. But that land is very sensitive and there are a lot of land-use problems there, so the best way to solve some of those problems was to buy that land. As I said, Mr Kirk knew that also and he worked hard to get a lot of this land.

Now what's going to happen when the conservation authorities do not pay their taxes? We're going to be in trouble and I'm afraid we may lose some of this land and the people of Ontario will lose the land also, and it may be lost for ever if development takes over, if the municipalities are forced to sell it. I want to tell you, Mr Speaker, that we're in a serious problem here.

In my area, I have four conservation authorities and I'm proud of them all. We have the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, the Saugeen conservation authority, the Nottawasaga conservation authority and a little part of the Grand, and I know there are some people here today from the Grand also, as well as the other three conservation authorities.

The big thing that's a let-down is that the bureaucrats at Queen's Park promised us they would pay this. Now, we understand that the government has problems with money right now and we in this party want to help it out and solve that problem. We know we don't have a lot of money in Ontario right now, but this is not the way to do it, to download it on to the municipalities.

What happened is that each of the ministries was told it had to cut back, and that's fine, we agree with that. But the bureaucrats in the MNR, who have always been jealous of the conservation authorities because they do a far better job of delivering programs, said, "Hey, we'll nail the conservation authorities; we'll take the money from them," and that's what they did.

1010

Mr Murdoch: But the problem is, it goes right back down to the poor taxpayer.

These bureaucrats said, "We're going to nail them," and that's what they did and they duped the government. I think when the government wakes up and finds out what the bureaucrats did to them, it's going to agree with me on this motion. I hope that they will come out at 12 o'clock noon today when the vote will be on, and vote for this.

Also, I wanted to talk a little bit about A Blueprint for Success. That's also in this motion. The conservation authorities also want to help the government solve their problems and help them with their money, so what the conservation authorities did is that they got together

and came up with A Blueprint for Success, which will save almost \$100 million.

What I want the government to do is to listen to them. There's a lot of overlapping and duplication of programs. If somebody wants to develop, they have to go to almost 12 agencies, and a lot of those agencies say the same thing, do the same thing. Well, we can save a lot of money by looking at this Blueprint for Success and help the government out in its problems.

This is why this resolution's been put on the floor today. I'm looking forward for the government to support me on this and then it can go back to the Ministry of Natural Resources and tell the bureaucrats that they can't download on to the municipalities through the conservation authorities, because it's not going to work. We're going to lose some sensitive land which we don't want to do. What's going to happen also is that municipalities and individuals are not going to help support conservation authorities buying more land because they need their tax base, and we'll lose sensitive areas that should be bought right now.

There are lots of areas in our province right now that need to be protected and this is the only way it can be done, or one of the best ways it can be done, because everybody in Ontario shares the pain when the taxes are paid through the province to the conservation authorities.

Again, I just want to point out the importance of this resolution and the importance of the government of the day supporting this. I'm sure my colleagues from the Liberal Party are here to support us and I know I have support in our own party to help find a solution to this problem.

One way is to give back their land tax money immediately. It must be done right now, because the taxes are due. The municipalities need the money. They've already budgeted their budgets. If they're not paid now, that means that they're going to have to go back to the local taxpayer and raise taxes to make up the shortfall.

In my area alone, there could be over \$300,000 lost, which is a large amount of money if you take it over the area of Grey and Bruce and we just can't afford that there, and the rest of the people of Ontario and places like that can't afford to lose this money. If we want to keep Ontario healthy and a good place to live, and places that need protecting, this is the only way it can be done. I hope that everyone here will support me in this bill.

Interruption.

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): To start off with, I just want to make the comment that—

The Deputy Speaker: Could you wait just for a minute, please. I would like to remind the people in the gallery that it's not permitted to applaud. Only the members on the floor can make noise, but not the

people in the gallery. I would ask for your kind cooperation. The member for Cochrane North.

Mr Wood: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I'm pleased to get up and make a few brief comments on the bill brought forward by the member for the Conservative Party. This is a budget item that he's asking to be reversed, the conservation rebate tax be reversed in the budget. We had the expenditure control, we had the budget and we had the social contract talks of nine weeks that were part of trying to control the amount of money the government is able to spend.

On the conservation authorities, I attended a meeting and spoke to the authorities on April 19 at Airport Road in Mississauga. The message at that time was made very clear, that we have to find a better and more efficient way of dealing with all the ministries and agencies out there, find better and more innovative ways of dealing with things.

Conservation authorities were created primarily to meet very specific challenges—flooding and erosion control—and they've been doing that for almost 50 years. We realize that the job is not done, but the need for major capital programs is greatly diminished.

An enormous amount of publicity has been carried out. An article from the London Free Press of June 1 mentions a lot of duplication between different ministries. It suggests that there is probably \$100 million of duplication, money being spent that is just duplicating what the municipalities, the province, conservation authorities, and other ministries are involved in supplying there.

I would expect that when the member for Grey brought forth this resolution, he knew full well that any suggestion or idea that a budget item we dealt with be reversed—I'm opposing the resolution he has brought forward. I believe there are other ways and means of dealing with this. There have been a lot of different meetings, including the meeting at which I was their guest speaker. We have to find ways and means of dealing with that realistically and not just reversing that.

There are going to be meetings with a number of different ministries, including with the Minister of Natural Resources, Howard Hampton. I understand that meetings are going to be held later on next week to talk about the whole situation, the problem we've had. We had to find ways and means to reduce the expected deficit from \$17-plus billion down to \$9.2 billion. The conservative authorities were not being singled out any more than any other group to find the reductions.

Mr Murdoch: It's not \$9.2 billion. You're still over \$10 billion.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Grey, you had your turn.

Mr Wood: In the brief time I have, I believe we should all work together to find a way of dealing with

this. The conservation authorities, in conjunction with MNR, with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, with various ministries, have come up with some programs where they're saying there's a lot duplication, a lot of waste. I think we should encourage them to continue on this route and encourage them all to sit down together to find ways and means of making sure that the pain and hurting that every agency is feeling right across the province is the least painful possible.

I'd just repeat that conservation authorities were created primarily to find ways of controlling flooding and erosion. This process is going to continue, but we have to find ways of doing it within the financial restraints we've been faced with, the worst restraints we've ever been faced with going back 50 years, since the recession.

With that, I'd just like to say thank you very much, and I'll listen to the comments from the other members.

1020

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I'm rising to support the resolution which is before the House today. I think it makes a lot of sense.

The program initially was to encourage people to turn over properties to conservation authorities. It allowed conservation authorities to acquire, for the general public good, lands which were environmentally sensitive. It seems to me that when that program was introduced, it received a good deal of applause from a wide cross-section of the public, and for this reason I believe it should be restored.

It's interesting. If I had asked people, when I had the opportunity to be the Environment minister of this province, "Which party do you think is probably going to deliver most in terms of environmental conservation?" many objective people, because the NDP has always portrayed itself in this way, would perhaps have suggested that the New Democratic Party would have been the party to do it.

How ironic it is that today the budgets of the Ministry of Environment and Energy and the budgets of the Ministry of Natural Resources are severely cut at a time when the government has an opportunity to look at all of its ministries and make choices. The easy choice, of course, is always to say everybody's going to be cut equally in every ministry and it kind of keeps cabinet ministers happy. To govern, however, is to choose and to make decisions, and it seems to me that if the government wished to indicate a priority for the environment and for conservation, the measures announced in the last budget would not have been introduced. Now we have a situation where the operating grants to conservation authorities are being cut back.

The conservation authorities, as well as everybody at the municipal level—and I look at the general municipal level when we talk about conservation authorities—fully

recognize that we're in difficult economic times. They don't expect that the provincial government is going to be opening up the coffers and giving millions upon millions of new dollars for the purpose of the operations of conservation authorities.

But one of the problems that they confront is that the government has not given sufficient notice to anybody at the municipal level of the kind of drastic cuts that we're seeing in operating budgets of conservation authorities and other local authorities across the province, so their ability to adjust, their ability to make the changes that are necessary, is severely limited by the fact that there was very little notice of what was going on. In any event, it seems to me that if we want to preserve for future generations the lands and the circumstances that exist on those lands, it's going to require an appropriate investment by the provincial government in that regard.

I have raised with the Premier on a number of occasions in this House a number of expenditures that I think are outlandish. I've dwelt on the issue of, for instance, government advertising and what I consider to be self-serving government advertising. If the government were to cut back on that, cut back on the kind of electronic and print advertising that is simply a pat on the back publicly for the government, and would devote those funds to conservation authorities, I think we would find that the circumstances for conservation authorities would be much better.

Now, by eliminating the conservation land tax rebate program, the government has, as I say, eliminated a program that had a good cross-section of support. Sometimes, programs that governments implement satisfy one specific group, one specific organization, one specific segment of society. I would suggest to members of this House that that particular tax rebate program had widespread support across Ontario. If you talked to people from various walks of life, if you talked to people who are supporters of various political parties, I think you would find a pretty good consensus that that was an excellent program.

To see an NDP government eliminate that program, an NDP government which had its Agenda for People, which it brought out during the election campaign and shared with people during the election campaign, to have that same NDP government now withdraw that particular conservation land tax rebate program is indeed ironic and certainly not acceptable.

I am alarmed by the fact that we could be losing environmentally sensitive lands, that in desperation, just as individuals in desperation are forced to sell off properties and lands from time to time, the circumstances facing conservation authorities are such that they are going to be compelled to do the same. It is estimated that by eliminating the conservation land tax rebate program, which of course we know is a subsidy

provided by the provincial government to the conservation authorities—it assisted them in paying property taxes on lands they administered—the government can save \$3.6 million. But according to the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario, nine to 10 conservation authorities have given preliminary indications that they will have to consider land sales in 1993, and that number could virtually double in 1994.

That seems unacceptable to me. I hear people talking about the Oak Ridges moraine, I hear people talking about the Niagara escarpment and other beautiful lands across Ontario, and I think most people would concede that it is a worthwhile objective to save those lands for future generations and for the enjoyment of present generations, to maintain the fauna and the wildlife that exist in those particular areas.

In addition to this, the conservation authorities are of course going to be facing layoffs. That means more unemployment in various areas of the province and it also means a reduced service provided to people. It's interesting to note that when people want to practise restraint, and everyone agrees with restraint, there are consequences.

Our quarrel in the opposition is this specific program. We recognize that the government is looking for every possible way to save, and the conservation authorities have said they recognize this as well. They have taken a long-term and comprehensive view of the kinds of programs that are administered by various ministries, such as the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of Environment and Energy. Those three ministries are involved in one way or another, along with conservation authorities and sometimes local municipalities, in administering various programs. Some good suggestions have come forward from the conservation authorities on how these efforts can be coordinated and money can be saved.

So I will be, I'm sure with a lot of my colleagues, supporting this particular resolution. I hope that members on the governing side will listen carefully to the arguments put forward by people across this province and in this House and indeed that they will support this resolution.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I'm pleased to rise this morning in support of the resolution brought forward by my colleague the member for Grey. I'm in a rather unique position. I have spent 16 years on the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and I served two years as chairman, so I know the background about conservation authorities and the key role they have played in the delivery of the natural resources and the planning, management and the protection of the streams and waters in this province.

Since their formation in 1946, conservation authorities have witnessed first hand many of the serious problems that exist as a result of the responsibilities for

natural resources and environmental management. Today they are struggling through the maze of resource management agencies in order to find a logical way to ensure that resources of Ontario's watersheds can effectively be managed and enhanced.

They have done it well over the years, but their restraint in recent years is leaving the management agencies struggling to fulfil their mandates. They have obligations, commitments that have been made. They have capital projects under way, which are also funded by the local municipality in partnership.

I recognize the importance of this resolution and I recognize the input the member for Grey has had as chairman of his conservation authority. The key aspect of his resolution really has to do with the tax rebate. It's impossible for some conservation authorities now to pay their taxes. Some of them say, "We either sell the land or don't pay." They wrestle with how to pay the bills. The Otonabee Region Conservation Authority has some \$62,000 it's not going to get from the ministry to pay taxes. The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority has some \$70,000 it's not going to get to pay its taxes.

We have seen the Blueprint for Success prepared by the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario, which it says will save the government \$100 million. Is that not a step in the right direction?

The future plan for wetlands is the other important aspect of his bill.

1030

On the 20th anniversary of the conservation authorities program being administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources, it has declined: The 1992 financial support in inflation-adjusted dollars was only 45% of what it was 20 years ago, the first year the partnership was put in place, and it's gone down ever since.

The former NDP Minister of Natural Resources announced in May 1991 that Ontario's 38 conservation authorities were to receive a total of \$48.7 million in funding for 1991. In November 1991 the same minister turned around and announced that his government had stopped payment on more than \$1 million in promised funds for conservation authorities. This is totally unacceptable when these authorities have made commitments with their local municipalities to go ahead and do the work that they thought was to be put in place. That's an example of what the member for Grey is talking about with regard to this resolution.

On May 5, 1993, the conservation authorities of Ontario released the Blueprint for Success: Restructuring Resource Management, and in the conclusion of this document, conservation authorities indicate that society can no longer afford to maintain the current institutional arrangements that promote inefficient resource management. They go on and suggest:

"Resource management must be planned and imple-

mented on a watershed basis. The province should focus its attention on the planning aspects of resource management, including legislation, policy, research and provincial-scale planning."

The province should have managed its resources better. We're not opposed to the restraint, but we say, when you come along and take the amount of money three years in a row off of conservation authorities, it really makes them stop and think, "Are we a partner or are we not?" And when we see the government spend \$1.3 million just to poll the public with regard to their opinions, we say that money is not being spent wisely.

So when we look at all the aspects of it and we look at what the nature conservancy has done with regard to partnership in purchasing land, there are thousands of acres that have been purchased in Minesing Swamp. The taxes are being paid by the conservation authorities. It originally started out that the Nature Conservancy of Canada was a partner in that.

The recreational properties that have been established around the province by conservation authorities: Who is going to continue to maintain them with partnership of the local municipality? The government says that it's meeting with people. Well, we hear that all the time, they're meeting, but are they listening? Are they listening to the concerns?

The number of people who are here this morning supporting the member for Grey with this resolution are an indication of the concern that's out there across the province with regard to conservation authorities, so I urge everyone in this Legislature to vote yes for this legislation, because if you do that, you're voting yes for the environment, yes for the future of our children and yes for the future of parks and recreational properties in this province.

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): I'm going to try to take a little bit of a different tack in regard to what is happening here and what this resolution is all about and what really strikes at the core to this whole debate.

I think all of us recognize, the people who are here from the conservation authorities, the public that is watching this debate today and members in this House all understand where we find ourselves today, not only in Ontario but most other jurisdictions across North America.

The problem is simple. There's a pot of money about this big and there are needs that are about that big, and the difficulty with us, like anybody in the private sector or anybody with their personal finances, is that you need to be able to deal with the question of, how do you manage your cost in regard to what's happening on the expenditure side? That's the problem we have.

This problem isn't a new one. No, this problem's been around for a while, and the problem has been

probably magnified, I would say probably about 10 times, in light of what the recession we've been going through for the last two or three years has been. We've seen governments across Canada have the same problem where costs have been increasing on a very, very steady increase as a slope because of the demands that are put on governments because of the recession.

There are more people unemployed. There are more people needing help as far as unemployment insurance, social assistance, other kinds of pensions. When people are out of work, there's difficulty when it comes to home problems where people have to access their community health services etc, so our costs go up.

But at the same time, the difficulty is that revenue went down because there are not as many people working. The problem that we have in this province is the problem that we have across this country: There are not enough jobs out there, and with not enough jobs, there's not enough money coming into the tax coffers in order to be able to pay for those programs, such as what we are talking about in the conservation authorities.

So governments of the day are stuck with some very difficult decisions, and the decision is, how do you manage this problem? The government has some choices. The government can say, "That's okay; we're not going to touch anything and we're going to allow things to go the way that they are and we'll allow the debt to accumulate and accumulate and accumulate." Well, we've seen the federal government do that over the years, and we see now a \$35-billion-per-year debt that is sitting at the federal level that nobody's dealt with. What I fear in the long run is that after the next federal election, no matter who's there as a government, they're going to have to deal with that very serious problem.

How are they going to deal with it? They will have to cut, and once they have to cut, they're going to come on to us, the provinces, and cut the transfer payments, and we'll be in a situation where increasingly governments will have a difficult time finding money to pay for problems.

Interjections.

Mr Bisson: So what we are doing here in Ontario is to say we need to be able to deal with the problem. I see I've got the hackles up in the Conservative caucus, anyway.

The problem is that we have to manage our expenditures. So government made some decisions. Are the decisions easy? Of course not. Do governments enjoy making these decisions? Of course not. Are conservation authorities important to our society? Of course they are. But the fact still remains there's not enough money in the pot to pay for them, and for the member across the way to suggest that we shouldn't deal with the question of expenditure reduction and we should just make sure

that everybody gets the same amount of money that they got in the past, or somehow magically take the money from another ministry to give it to the conservation authorities in order to allow them to operate in their entity as they are now, is to say, "Transfer the problem from MNR and put it on to the conservation authorities." I don't think that the people of Ontario want us to do that. I think what the people of Ontario want us to do is to be fair in the approach.

So let's examine what happened through the expenditure reduction plan. The government looked at all of the programs that the government offers, from the Ministry of Natural Resources to the Ministry of Health, all of them, and the conservation authorities fall under the MNR. Each one of those ministries was affected as far as costs, and each of those agencies that are transferred dollars from those ministries is affected when it comes to cost, in one way or another. Either people will be affected through the social contract in regard to the negotiations that are going on now or their actual budgets have been reduced. Everybody has to be able to share in being able to manage the costs. That's simply what's happening.

The political problem we have is that, first of all, people don't accept change very well and, secondly, people don't want to accept any cuts in their own backyard. I don't as an individual who works as a salaried employee of the government, and I don't expect the conservation authorities accept that either.

So why was the money cut in regard to the conservation authority on the conservation land tax? It is because there isn't the base there in order to pay for the bill. The conservation authorities, like all other agencies within the government, have to do their part in being able to manage down the cost.

The political problem that we have, and I'll get back to where I was going initially, is that it is very difficult to manage this politically. Why? Because you have, first of all, the media out there that will report what is going on, and there's a little bit of fearmongering going on at the same time where it gets very, very difficult for a government to be able to have any kind of rational debate about this because people are hurt, people are upset, people are all kinds of things because of some of the things that happen within the opposition, sometimes within our own government caucus and what happens within the media.

I say, if we take a look at the problem, that we look at what happened in the private sector maybe as an analogy. The private sector over the past number of years has had to cut very drastically in order for some of those companies to stay alive. I look at my riding: Dome Mines, a big mining company; 300 people got laid off two years ago, three years ago, because of what was happening inside the industry. Those workers had no opportunity to deal with that, other than just accept-

ing the layoff. Falconbridge in my riding has just announced 250 people are going to be laid off at that mine, and the list goes on and on. We just noticed IBM in the papers yesterday saying they're going to lay off another 1,000 people.

I say that because I think it's important that people understand what's happening out there. You have a private sector that's hurting. The opposition will say, "Well, it's all Bob Rae's fault." Well, give me a break. I think people are smart enough to figure that that's not the problem. But what's happening is that because you've got fewer people working, you've got fewer people paying taxes and the government has less and less revenue to be able to deal with the question of how we fund conservation authorities and how we fund various kinds of programs.

1040

The difficulty we have in this province is that we need to find a way that we can start having some kind of mechanism or some kind of way of getting people to the problem. If you can get people to the problem, to understand what the heck is going on, and you get people to understand what some of the options are, maybe then we can try to manage this in a little bit better way. But it's extremely difficult to do that because people don't want to accept sometimes that they're the ones who are going to have to take the cut. That's as simple as what it comes down to.

I would just say in finishing—

Interjections.

Mr Bisson: I look at the Conservative members across the way jumping up and down in this debate. I look at you and I look at eight years of Tory government in Ottawa and I say, "Shame on you." So don't start your sanctimoniousness with me.

The question we have to ask ourselves is simply this: Do conservation authorities serve a useful purpose in our society? Of course they do. Do conservation authorities do a good job within our communities? Of course they do. Would we want to be able to give all the money necessary to conservation authorities to do the proper job? Of course we would all want to.

The reality is there is not enough money in the pot to be able to make that happen. Conservation authorities, like everybody else within MNR, within the Ministry of Health, within the Ministry of Education, within all sectors of government, are going to have to deal with the question of how we learn how to do more with less. Do we like that? Of course not. But such is the reality that we find ourselves in today in 1993 in the economy that we are sitting in. We're not the only ones having to deal with it. It's happening all across the country. It's happening in the United States. It's happening everywhere. We look across the border to the United States, where they're trying to cut \$400 billion in spending.

So I think we need to find a way in order to get into these kinds of debates and to say, "What's the problem, what do we do, and how are we able to share information so that we can manage this as best we can?" At the end of the day, it is going to mean that there will be reductions. I think we all understand that. But for the member from the opposition to say, "Well, the solution of this year is to say conservation authorities are not going to get the cut and we're going to somehow get the money from MNR to do it," is transferring the problem from one particular ministry on to another. I don't think that's a solution that will, quite frankly, work.

I think conservation authorities are responsible bodies that are going to deal with it the best way they can. It's not going to be easy; I admit that. But like every other ministry, they're going to have to try to deal with this problem in as proactive a way as possible.

I say, just in closing, is this something that people like? Of course not. I think all of us would rather be in a different position. I think all of us would like to have an endless pot of money to be able to pay for these programs over the long run. But such is not the case. We need to manage this the best way that we can, and we have to find a way in this province of getting our partners together and saying: "Here's the problem. Where do we go from here? How can we find the best possible solution, given where we're at?"

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): It's my pleasure to take part in this debate on a very important resolution from the member from Grey, and let me say at the outset that I will be wholeheartedly supporting the resolution.

I think there is no question that for those who are wondering why this province is in a state of chaos, who are questioning the mismanagement, all they have to do is refer to the statements made by the members from Cochrane South and Cochrane North. I think that underlines the chaos and it underlines the mismanagement. I think it's a bit early in the day for members in this Legislature to receive a sanctimonious, patronizing, holier-than-thou statement by any member of the government while this province finds itself mired in a state of chaos.

I want to speak directly to the resolution itself. I think we recognize that right now the conservation authorities pay their taxes on land but receive the money back from the province in terms of a rebate. The government has cancelled that rebate program. What that has as a result is, of course, that the conservation authorities now have an expense which they otherwise did not have.

My area of responsibility is found within the Credit Valley Conservation Authority. I know there are many people here from their own conservation authorities. We recognize that conservation authorities are made up of

men and women, dedicated individuals who are committed to a purpose: preservation of environmentally sensitive lands. I think that people in the past, in the present and in the future will be the beneficiaries of the tremendous work that is done by conservation authorities throughout this province.

So the government has now cut a program which will without question increase the costs for conservation authorities. But they've not just done that; they have also reduced the amount of money that they are going to be receiving through the expenditure control plan. So it is not just that they have cancelled a program which increases the expenses; they have also at the same time said to the conservation authorities, on very short notice, "Your revenue will also be reduced." So this is, without question, a double hit on conservation authorities, and I know from mine, as being representative of many throughout the province, they are doing the very best they can to deal with the realities of a fiscal nature that the province finds itself in, and I want to deal in a short while on that.

What happens when you have this double hit to the conservation authorities? Firstly, it may very well be the conservation authorities will not be able to acquire more lands by will or by grant or by gift, and they won't be able to because they won't be able to afford to pay the taxes on the land which has been offered to them. I think we all suffer if that becomes an obstacle for a conservation authority in any jurisdiction to acquire lands.

Secondly, as a result of the cancellation of the rebate program, it may very well be—and I do not fearmonger, as members of the government would have the general public believe in terms of the opposition or third party—but it may very well be that conservation authorities will go into default in terms of realty tax payments. They may very well have to go into default because of the fact that not only has the rebate program been cancelled but also the amount of money that they're going to be receiving has been reduced, and that leaves one with very few and very narrow options.

Thirdly, it may result, and I think the word is most likely "will" result, in a greater burden on local municipalities. In this respect, I think that we recognize that the smaller the municipality, the fewer number of people, the lower the tax base, the greater the burden, and I think that the government has not recognized the impact that that will have on municipalities across the board, especially the smaller municipalities, as a result of its action.

Lastly, in terms of the impact, I think in principle it has always been the objective of governments, and I do not include the present government in this respect, that it is in the best interests of this province that conservation authorities acquire land, environmentally protect land. I think that has always been that principle. This

cancellation of this program really erodes the principle that has been in this province for many, many years. And I'll tell you, as a result of that, we and our children will suffer. If conservation authorities are impeded in doing the work that they have done so well in the past and if they're impeded in doing that work in the future, it is not just us in this Legislature who will suffer, but it is also going to be our children and our children's children. So it is not just the cancellation of a program, as important as that program is, but it is also striking at the very principle of what conservation authorities have been doing so well in the past, have been asked to do, have been promoted to do, and that is acquire environmentally sensitive land.

Again, the members of the government say, "Well, you know, we only have X amount of dollars," and they speak in that what has become too obvious patronizing way. Conservation authorities, let me tell you, have put forward to the government a blueprint. They have said: "We recognize the problems. We have looked at the ways in which we can save moneys." They have put forward a blueprint, a blueprint which in their opinion would save many millions of dollars.

The Minister of Natural Resources said he's going to take a look at it, but that is not enough and I think the conservation authorities in the province recognize that it's not enough. There has to be a commitment by the government and a commitment by the Premier that not only will the Minister of Natural Resources take a look and be part of that blueprint, but also that there will be a commitment by the government that all ministries who are affected will be part. If that is not the case, then I have very strong reservations about whether that blueprint program will in fact succeed. There has to be a commitment by the government that they will bring in all ministries that will be affected to really take a look at that blueprint.

Conservation authorities are not just saying, "More, more, more"; they are saying, "We recognize the fiscal position of this province, we are ready to deal with it, we have a blueprint for success," and I think it's the responsibility of the government to start to listen to the men and women who man the conservation authorities in this province.

1050

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I would like to, first of all, congratulate the member for Grey for bringing in this resolution. It's very important at this time to bring to the attention of the government the seriousness of its budgetary cuts relative to the conservation authorities.

I would also congratulate the member for Simcoe East for his detailed explanation of the past history of conservation authorities and the service that they have given to Ontario over the years.

We realize that cutbacks are necessary in order to

control spending and to control deficit, and that's not the discussion here this morning. The member for Cochrane North indicated that we were trying to fight cutbacks that you were trying to put in the budget to balance your books. That is not why we're here this morning at all. The reason we're here this morning is, somehow, the Ministry of Natural Resources has put what you might say is a double whammy on the conservative authorities. To correct the situation, all you have to do is restore the tax rebates. The other 10% or 11% cuts that have been imposed, they can deal with that.

Mr Wood: Which hospital do you want to shut down to get that?

Mr Jordan: Don't confuse the issue. I say to the member over there, if he would give us a commitment this morning that his ministry would reinstate the tax rebates while they bring all the ministries together that are involved in this and get them around the table so that we can come up with one-window shopping for environmental control in the province of Ontario—

Mr Wood: They're meeting.

Mr Jordan: They're meeting, but I say, in the meantime, that we put a hold on this tax rebate so that the conservation authorities are not with their backs to the wall, getting ready to dispense with land.

Mr Wood: The budget said no.

Mr Jordan: Never mind the budget; you wouldn't even let us debate it. Do you want us to debate it this morning or what?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Jordan: In talking with some of the members of the government, who have the power to make a decision on this resolution, I wonder in their discussion if they really understand what the conservation authorities do across the province of Ontario. The conservation authorities are Ontario's only community-based environmental protection agency, and I stress community-based. They're Ontario's only watershed-based resource management agency.

The conservation authorities represent 497 municipalities and 11 regional governments. They have a 50-year proven track record of delivery. Of all the groups across this province that provide a service to the people, this is the last group that needs to be cut by what amounts to 32%, when you take the tax rebate and the overall cutback to the conservation authorities.

So I ask the members of the government this morning to think about an accountable, effective and efficient way to balance its books if that's what its objective is—sometimes I wonder—but to please this morning understand that they cannot hit the conservation authorities for 32% and other groups for 10% or 11%. To correct the situation, and it's very simple, just put that ruling on the tax rebate on hold. Reinstate the tax rebate

and let us get together and have meetings and get this problem resolved.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I'm very pleased to rise in support of my good friend the member for Grey in his resolution today with respect to conservation authorities and restoring some fiscal sanity from the provincial government's perspective in helping out the conservation authorities.

I don't have time to read the entire resolution, but he has said, "The conservation land tax rebate should be immediately reinstated to conservation authorities, and the government should seriously consider and implement the concepts outlined in the Blueprint for Success," which is a blueprint, a plan, that has been put forward by the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario as a helping suggestion to this government, which is in such chaos and such a mess that it needs advice and helpful comments from its various transfer partners.

As the member for Wellington, I represent four conservation authorities: the Grand River Conservation Authority, represented today by Allan Holmes, the general manager, and Archie MacRobbie, the chairman, and I'm pleased to welcome them here today; the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority; the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, and the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority. I have four that I represent and I've spoken to most of them with respect to this issue. They're very, very concerned.

This particular resolution deals with two major issues: the funding issue and the alternative plan that's been put forward by the conservation authorities. From the tone of the debate from the government side, I still believe it does not fundamentally understand what conservation authorities do and the importance they have to their communities.

Interjection.

Mr Arnott: Well, you don't fundamentally understand what you're doing then, because they have three sources of funding: the provincial operating capital grants; the municipal levy, the money they receive from the municipalities on their watersheds, and the conservation land tax rebate. In partnership with municipalities over the last 50 years, they've done an outstanding job of delivering programs on a very cost-effective, cost-efficient basis.

With respect to the Grand River Conservation Authority, we had a meeting this morning with members from the watershed. They were all invited. I was informed, and I was shocked by the statistics of how this government action is going to affect the Grand River Conservation Authority. They pay about \$1 million in taxes to the local resident municipalities, the authority does, and this cancellation of the conservation land tax rebate means that \$500,000, money that was

formerly coming to the conservation authority from the government, is no longer going to be coming. What it means to this authority is a 30% cut in the operating budget of the Grand River Conservation Authority, and that means important programs will not be delivered.

I don't even have to get into the social contract, because that's going to be discussed later, but that has had a profound impact and it's creating a lot of difficulty for all the government's transfer partners, including the Grand River Conservation Authority and the other conservation authorities. It's making it extremely difficult to plan. The longer this government continues to waffle on this issue, it's creating a great deal of uncertainty and a lot of problems with respect to budgeting and planning in these important agencies.

Mr Wood: What's your solution, Ted?

Mr Arnott: My solution is very simple: Take that blueprint and read it. You should read it and you should recognize it for what it is.

The Deputy Speaker: Please address the Chair.

Mr Arnott: Mr Speaker, the minister's parliamentary assistant has challenged me. But that is the solution.

There is a great deal of constructive suggestions within that particular document and it's very important that the government take a good, hard look at it. I know that the association of conservation authorities is bringing forward more detailed suggestions. Don't get caught up in what the civil servants tell you, because it's very, very important and you yourselves espouse this. This particular government says you've got to deliver service, especially with respect to environmental issues, on an ecosystem basis, and conservation authorities are ideally set up to do that precise thing. I would challenge you to look at it in those terms.

I'm very concerned about the fact that the government has indicated that it's not going to support this resolution. I would encourage them in the 15 seconds that I have left to please, please rethink their position. It's very, very important. It's an important issue to rural Ontario. This is another fact that we are constantly having to put forward, that rural Ontario is getting the short end of the stick with this government on just about every single issue.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Grey, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr Murdoch: First, I would like to thank my friends from the Liberal Party, Steve Offer and Jim Bradley, for supporting us on this. Their support is greatly appreciated. Also, Ted Arnott, Leo Jordan and Al McLean from the Conservative Party, to be here to speak on this important matter today, I certainly thank you.

The problem is, we've got this government over here that doesn't understand anything. You've heard every-

body over here tell you and you still don't understand. You're sitting over there, cackling and heckling away, and you don't even know what you're talking about. The important thing is, we've got to get these guys to understand something.

So far, there's no one left in Ontario whom you haven't got mad at you. You got voted in, you were an environmental power, you always said the environment was important, and now you're just throwing it away. All kinds of environmentally sensitive areas are going to be lost to this province just because you people don't understand, and you don't take the time to understand things.

1100

There are two things in this resolution. One is that you should implement the concepts of the Blueprint for Success that the conservation authorities gave to you. You say you can do that. Okay, that's one. We've got you half way. But the tax rebate has to be given back immediately. The conservation authorities must pay their taxes to the municipality. You can't download; you can't keep downloading on everyone. So take a look at that and at 12 noon, when we vote on this, look inside yourselves and say, "We've got to give that back."

You can do that. I know some of you over there are smiling, but I know you can come back here at 12 noon and vote for this resolution. Then go to your Minister of Natural Resources and have the money reinstated because the conservation authorities certainly need this money. There's lots of other land out there that needs to be bought which won't be if you don't change your attitude over there. That is the problem: your attitude. You always say you consult. The trouble is that you've never listened to anybody and you're going to have to start doing that pretty soon.

The other thing, before I go is that I'd like to thank everybody coming from Grey and Bruce. I certainly appreciate them all being here. I can't name them all, but I hope they hang around for 12 o'clock and we'll see how the socialists vote then.

The Deputy Speaker: The time for the first ballot item has expired.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mrs MacKinnon moved private member's notice of motion number 15:

That, in the opinion of this House, since promoting trade, investment and job growth is the leading priority of the government of Ontario and that the North American free trade agreement is, on balance, not in the best interests of the province because this agreement:

- (1) will cause net job loss in Ontario;
- (2) will apply downward pressure on environmental standards;
- (3) will apply downward pressure on labour standards;

(4) makes no mention of labour adjustment for workers and since the federal labour adjustment assistance remains inadequate because of the job losses caused by the FTA;

(5) encroaches into more areas of provincial jurisdiction, and will limit Ontario's ability to implement its economic and social policies and because the deal intrudes on more areas of provincial jurisdiction than previous trade agreements, such as regulation of investment, financial services and standards;

(6) will not end American trade harassment;

(7) will treat Canadian and Mexican energy reserves differently, and

(8) will make the devastation of the FTA worse;

Therefore, this House urges the government of Ontario to oppose the implementation of the North American free trade agreement by all possible means.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the member has 10 minutes for her presentation.

Mrs Ellen MacKinnon (Lambton): Promoting trade and investment in job growth is the leading priority of the government of Ontario, and in the opinion of this government, the North American free trade agreement is not in the best interests of the province.

The cabinet committee on North American free trade provided a public forum for debate and it is interesting to note that the majority of presenters to the committee were against NAFTA.

The free trade agreement has already cost Ontario 45,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector and we will lose thousands more with NAFTA. The reasons are basic and simple. Mexico has low wages and weak enforcement of labour standards. In order to compete, some Ontario firms will have no choice but to demand workers reduce their wages or face layoffs. Some companies will think about diverting their investments and relocating to areas where production is cheaper. Either way, the Ontario worker pays.

We also know jobs will be lost as industries relocate to places where lack of enforcement of environmental standards makes production cheaper.

NAFTA also threatens the jobs of workers who are least able to rebound from sudden unemployment: those with less than a grade 9 education, those over 45, and those who are female.

On balance, the price that the people of Ontario will have to pay for NAFTA is too high. It threatens the jobs of tens of thousands of workers and it limits Ontario's ability to build the kind of economy and society we desire.

Ontario will also be faced with the responsibility of looking after workers who will lose their jobs because of the NAFTA deal. In 1988, Prime Minister Brian

Mulroney promised, and I quote, "the finest labour adjustment programs in the world" to deal with workers displaced by the free trade agreement.

Well, that didn't happen. Instead, the federal government cut and diverted unemployment insurance funds and failed to deliver on its commitment to fund worker training and adjustment programs, and there's no indication that Prime Minister-elect Kim Campbell will be any different. The federal government has already stated it will not provide further labour adjustment programs, despite the fact that NAFTA will increase the vulnerability of about 350,000 Ontario workers in industries sensitive to imports. Workers in these industries are typically older, less educated and female.

The federal government has failed to recognize the adjustment consequences of its trade policy and has not delivered on its commitments to fund training and adjustment programs. Instead, provincial governments and workers have been left to bear the burden of NAFTA's effects on the economy and the workplace.

A fundamental concern about NAFTA is that it doesn't fix a critical flaw of the free trade agreement: Ontario's lack of a guaranteed market in the United States. When the free trade agreement was introduced, the federal government promised assured access to the United States market and an end to harassment of our goods crossing the border. Unfortunately, that has not happened, and there is nothing in NAFTA that remedies the problem.

What is the federal government's position on the issue? Every time there is another trade dispute concerning soft lumber, steel, hogs, pork or automobiles, the federal government's response is: "Don't worry. We'll win most of the cases eventually."

As our Premier Bob Rae noted recently in a speech at McMaster University, "The pursuit of trade should be something that we do in order to increase our quality of life and to improve the nature of our community." The Ontario government believes its ability to pursue those goals is harmed by NAFTA, and for a variety of reasons.

NAFTA prohibits the provincial government using its authority to favour Ontario firms and inhibits our ability to pursue policies in the interests of Ontario. For example, NAFTA would not permit Ontario to reserve access to the forestry and fishery industries for Ontarians. NAFTA also encroaches into many new areas of provincial jurisdiction, including the regulation and enforcement of environmental standards, financial services, land transportation and speciality air services. None of these were covered by the free trade agreement.

NAFTA will also allow foreign corporations and investors to challenge provincial measures they consider contrary to NAFTA. To make matters worse, the province has no means to participate directly in the

general dispute settlement process.

The NAFTA agreement will also have a serious impact on women. Ontario women in the manufacturing sector typically earn their living in labour-intensive industries which have already been hit hard by free trade. Since the free trade agreement came into being, Ontario has lost tens of thousands of manufacturing jobs. Under NAFTA, the Ontario government believes the province will lose tens of thousands more as companies lay off workers or relocate to places where labour is cheaper and goods cost less to produce.

In addition, women dominate the workforce in several manufacturing industries that are among the most likely to suffer under NAFTA: knitting mills, textiles, apparel, footwear, and printing and publishing. The price Ontario women will have to pay is too high: lost jobs, downward pressure on wages and labour standards, and lack of labour adjustment programs.

For all these reasons I have just mentioned, it is clear to me and my government that the North American free trade agreement does not serve the best interests of Ontario, and it is also very clear to the majority of the residents in this province that they do not support this agreement either.

1110

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): I welcome this opportunity to join in this debate and try to put what I hope is a clearer view on what we are talking about. This morning I was interested to see a headline and a story in the *Toronto Star*, and it says, "Only the NDP understands the real world out there." This was a quote from the federal leader, Audrey McLaughlin, "Only the NDP understands the real world." After listening to the member speak, I can only say that it is only the NDP which hasn't a clue as to what's happening in the real world out there.

Let me tell you: One of the things that people do not understand, and don't understand because as I say they live in an artificial world, is that if low wages were the only criteria for industrial success, Haiti would be the industrial capital of the world. Our competition does not come from low-wage countries. Our competition comes from Japan, it comes from Sweden, it comes from Germany, it comes from the UK, it comes from the United States, all of which are very high wage countries. Their wages are higher than ours.

Cheap labour is not a problem. It is only a problem in those jobs that Canadians will not work at anyway. What we have to do is we have to establish a system where we become truly competitive.

There is another fallacy. The member states that with the approval of NAFTA, suddenly Ontarians and Ontario workers are going to be put at great disadvantage. I challenge you to go out into any supermarket, any department store, any kind of a manufacturing

facility and identify one Mexican product that is there. You won't see it. The trade between Canada and Mexico is infinitesimal.

When you consider that the combined trade between Canada and the United States is \$250 billion, the combined trade between Canada and Mexico is less than \$3 billion and it is not a factor in our economy. They have no effect. To suggest that because NAFTA is going to come into effect, suddenly everybody and every manufacturer in Ontario is going to go to Mexico is patently absurd. For the member to even suggest that indicates that she has no knowledge of what the real world is all about.

Let me tell you that we are in the situation that Canadians have far more to gain than they have to lose in NAFTA. We are marginal players in this deal, and I say this advisedly, because our trade between Mexico and Canada is so small. But consider this situation: If the United States and Mexico were to enter into an agreement and Canada was not a part of that, why would any foreign investor who was looking to establish a manufacturing facility put it into Canada? If they put it into the United States they get the benefit of the FTA and they would get the benefit of an agreement negotiated between Mexico and the United States.

We have to make sure we are at the table, that we are part of a loop of a North American trading bloc so we can make sure we remain as competitive as we can. To suggest that it would be in the best interests of Ontario and of Canada not to participate in that particular trading arrangement makes no sense.

I want to add that there's no question that there are problems with the agreement; hopefully, we can negotiate the best kind of deal we can in some of the side agreements that are being discussed.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): You sold them out already.

Mr Kwinter: I am not. I am defending Canada. I am defending our ability to be competitive.

I think you should understand, and I'm sure you know, that for every dollar that you have in your pocket, a third of that is because of trade. We are a heavily trade-dependent jurisdiction. Unfortunately, the government doesn't understand that, and it's gone about and shut down every one of our trading offices around the world without realizing that is the lifeblood of our economy.

If you take a look at our counterparts in the United States, for every dollar they have in their pocket, only 10 cents is there because of trade, so we are three times more trade-dependent than our American neighbours.

What does that mean? That means we have the opportunity; not because of NAFTA, but just because of the profile that NAFTA has given to the opportunities that are in Mexico. We have an economy in Mexico that

has over 80 million people. Marketers would salivate at the idea of accessing an 80-million-person market, yet Canadians, by and large, have no real presence.

There are some, and I'll give you an example because I happen to be involved in it. Magna has opened a plant in Puebla in Mexico. They have opened it in spite of NAFTA. They're there, they're operating. But they are providing opportunities for a Canadian company to expand, to be able to create employment, and that is what we talk about.

If you had suggested to anybody that we should not deal in the United States, people would run you out of town, because that is where we get the stimulus for our economy. I can tell you, in Mexico there is an opportunity for Canadian companies in a very, very expanding market, but even more importantly, it has a land link to Canada, which means it's easy to get access to. The city of Monterrey, Mexico, which is a burgeoning industrial centre, is closer to Toronto than Calgary is, and there are opportunities for Canadian manufacturers, Ontario technology, Ontario knowhow, to penetrate that market.

Canada has far more to gain in accessing the Mexican market than Mexico has in accessing the Canadian market, because Canadians have got a highly sophisticated, industrial base; there's no question. Mexico has some competitive advantages in the way of agriculture because of its climate and because of its subtropical location, but generally speaking, we have an opportunity to make sure that there is a market that will benefit Canadians and particularly benefit Ontarians.

The questions keep coming up that suddenly, environmental standards are going to be lowered, labour standards are going to be lowered, that people are going to flee to Mexico because of the cheap labour. Let me also disabuse you of a fact that everybody seems to talk about. All you have to do is talk to Frank Stronach, the president of Magna, and he will tell you that the labour rates in his plant in Mexico are not that different from the labour rates of his plants in Ontario. There's no question that they're lower, but you also have to understand that they are lower because they haven't got all the fringe benefits we have and some of the advantages we have. But the idea that there are people working in these high-tech industries and being paid pennies is just not true.

There's also no question that there are lots of people in Mexico who will work for very, very low wages because they live in very, very low wage areas. But the kind of work they do is not the kind of work we have to be concerned about. If we have to be concerned about that work, then we have to be concerned about Taiwan and Thailand and China and Hong Kong and Singapore and Poland and Brazil and every other low-wage country in the world. That is where the competitive situation is, and I can tell you that the traditional

supporters of the NDP are not prepared to do the jobs that command that kind of wage.

What we have to do as a country if we're going to be competitive is establish ourselves as the higher value added producers. I can tell you that manufacturers have no hesitation in paying whatever the job requires as long as the payment of that salary is tied to productivity. We have a problem where we demand high salaries for low productivity. What we have to do, if we are going to be competitive, is develop this ability to create higher value added jobs.

1120

I want to talk again for a minute about the FTA and the canard—that's the only word I can use to describe it—that there are hundreds and hundreds of thousands of jobs lost in Canada as a result of the FTA. If this FTA is so pervasive, how come it seems to have affected Germany, the United Kingdom and Japan, where every one of those jurisdictions is going through severe economic times and severe downsizing? What is happening is that we are involved in a global restructuring. We've gotten to the point where there are more players in the game, more people who are able to compete with us. As a result, if we're going to be competitive, we're going to have to get our act together and become more productive.

The NDP puts forward this motion at a time when it is bringing in its social contract, where it is saying that in order for us to be competitive, in order for us to get our fiscal house in order, we're going to have to downsize, we're going to have to get rid of employees, we're going to have to roll back wages. That is exactly what is happening in industry—exactly. When the Premier stands up and says that the civil service, the public service employees, cannot be exempted from the same thing that's happening in industry, that they have to play their part and understand that in order to become competitive we're going to have to downsize and get ourselves to the point where we are productive, that is exactly what has happened to industry. Industry reacted a lot sooner than government did, unfortunately.

What has happened is that we have this juxtaposition, this coincidence. At a time when there is in the industrialized world global competition, global recession, we have a downsizing of industry and a consolidation. The NDP in its wisdom has decided that this is all as a result of FTA, that this is what has happened: The free trade agreement has devastated us.

Let me just put a couple of things into the record so that you can put it into context, because the figures are similar in Mexico, as they are in the United States.

Before the free trade agreement, 80% of all of the trade in goods and services between Canada and the United States was duty-free, 80%. Of the 20% that was still tariff-laden, the average tariff was 10%, and that 10% was going to be removed over a period of five or

10 years. We are now into year 3, so the amount of influence of the FTA is minimal. It's only a fraction of that 20% that is being compounded.

Mexico is in exactly the same position. At the present time, 80% of the trade in goods and services between Canada and Mexico is duty-free. Of the 20% that still attaches duty, the average is about 10%. It's very similar to the United States.

What is going to happen with NAFTA is that there will be an ability to make some good adjustments, hopefully, to the FTA. I was the first one to criticize the FTA, not because I was opposed to free trade but because I was opposed to the deal; I thought it was a lousy deal and could have been better. I think NAFTA has made some corrections; not as many as I would like to see, and hopefully that will be resolved in some of the side agreements.

But the point is that in order for us to maintain the standard of living our citizens want, we are going to have to expand our trading horizons. To look at a market of over 80 million people, one that is in our hemisphere, one that has wonderful opportunities, and suddenly turn our back on it is folly of the highest order and is unworthy of a government.

What has happened is that there is a knee-jerk reaction, a feeling that if it's Mexico, it is bad. I have to refer to some of the members of the back bench who were critical of the fact that I was out promoting Canadian technology in Mexico. They thought that was a bad thing. We have to pick up the slack of what is happening, and Mexico presents that opportunity.

The Deputy Speaker: Your time has expired.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I'm pleased to add a few comments to the debate. I want to thank the member for his comments. As we all know, he's been actively involved in the trade issue and I think said it very well.

In fact, he said exactly what I was going to say right off the bat. Most of you on the other side don't even realize—I should set it up by telling you I worked for Livingston International, which is the largest custom broker here in Canada; not to start a commercial for them, but I'm familiar with what the products were. We made our money by paying duties and taxes on behalf of people.

Prior to the free trade agreement signed in the late 1980s—I will ask the members on the other side; they may know if they heard—what percentage of the products came in duty-free? Most people say 10%, 20%, 30%. I tell the members opposite, as a former custom broker, 80% of the product between Canada and the US came in duty-free prior to the free trade agreement. Prior to the free trade agreement the duty on computers, for example, which is one of our largest imports from the United States, was 3.5%. I know, because our

company paid the duties and taxes on behalf of many of the computer companies. So 3.5% was the duty that was paid. The value of the Canadian dollar has more to do with trade between Canada and the US than the free trade agreement does, I say to the members on the other side.

When they talk about blaming all our ills, I want to show you the budget that was introduced by your Treasurer, your budget, Ontario Budget 1993. Your Treasurer; I want everyone to know whose budget this is. I want you to turn to page 5 of that budget. Remember, I'm saying Floyd Laughren and Bob Rae's budget. These are their figures on trade. I will read it verbatim.

"So far this year, Ontario's international exports are up by more than 11%." Canadian auto exports are up 26%. "Manufacturing shipments have risen by more than 6%. Who says...Ontario can't compete? Who says Ontario workers are not among the best and the most productive in the world?"

Mr David Wininger (London South): You do. You just change your message depending on the day.

Mr Carr: We've got this member saying that all the jobs lost are due to free trade. Meanwhile, his government is saying that the percentage of increase has gone up. Quite frankly, we have lost the same amount of jobs since the Berlin Wall has fallen. You can blame it on free trade or the Berlin Wall; it makes about the same amount of sense. In March of this year we had the highest exports out of the province of Ontario to the United States we have ever had in the history of this province, even though they are in a dramatic recession as well.

I want to touch briefly on one little thing before I go. This government, in a time of fiscal restraint, spent \$300,000 going around the province with a program to fight the free trade agreement; \$300,000 at a time when we're cutting back nurses' salaries, teachers' salaries. We had a day care for second-rate cabinet ministers, the Minister of Agriculture and Food, to go around and produce a report that cost the people of Ontario \$300,000. What do you think that report said? Premier Rae, prior to the start of that committee said, "We're against the NAFTA agreement." Guess what happened after? Guess what they said? "We're against it."

We spent \$300,000 of taxpayers' money for political purposes to basically try and prop up your stupidity and your federal counterpart's, who, I might add, I heard last night saying she's going to fight NAFTA. Well, she's going to have a pretty good time, because she's at 8% in the polls. She is now pretty close to Preston Manning. All you need to do to a federal New Democrat today, or in Alberta or in British Columbia or anywhere, is say two words to make them recoil in fear, jump over banisters, anything to get out of the way. Those two words are "Bob Rae," because Bob Rae has done more to destroy jobs in the province of Ontario

than any free trade agreement, and I say—and I have respect for the member personally—you should be disgraced to come in and present this resolution when health care, education, every part of the provincial responsibility is going down the tubes. If you really have the gumption to believe what you say, then do the honourable thing, resign your seat and run federally. I don't think you've got the guts.

1130

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): It gives me great pleasure to have this opportunity to contribute to this debate. The free trade agreement has been a disaster. Thousands of unemployed factory workers in my riding of Peterborough could certainly tell you that—2,000 since February 1990. NAFTA will be more of the same.

I remember Pat Carney being quoted as saying of the Americans and the free trade negotiations, "We gave them everything they asked for." I can't believe that a government could sell us out as the Tories have done and still be taken seriously by the electorate. They can't do enough for the United States. It's heads you win, tails we lose. But this deal is not even good for the people of the United States, and for the people of Mexico it's terrible.

The member for Wilson Heights was implying that this was going to be a good deal all around. Tell that to the mothers of malformed babies in the maquiladora districts of Mexico. Tell them life has got—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. There is one person who has the floor. You all had your chance to debate. It's her time. The member for Peterborough.

Ms Carter: The standard of living has gone down there and we're being told that good jobs don't move. Well, a job in a car industry can be very good in Ontario and then when it gets to Mexico the pay is quite different and it's a low-wage job.

This is a deal made by and for the big multinational corporations. It aims to get us all organized in a way calculated to most maximize their profits. The interests of ordinary people, and that includes most business people, simply do not come into it. Of course we need to trade, but this is not the deal we need. Trade should be from a solid base of integrated local and regional enterprise and from a base of regional concern where people support each other and protect their environment. Business which has no loyalty to any population anywhere is liable to end up destroying far more wealth, freedom and happiness than it creates. Look at Haiti: It's a free-for-all and it's a hell on Earth.

This is a democratic country and a democratic province. Democracy was not handed to us on a plate; it had to be won from a ruling class which would much rather have continued to run things its own way. Now they're trying to take that democracy away from us

through the back door, leaving us with a democratic structure and process which will henceforth produce governments which have no power to govern. All the important decisions will have been made, laid down in the terms of the free trade agreement and NAFTA. The federal government is not only giving its own power away without any interaction with public opinion; it's giving away the powers of the provincial governments too. Those governments have had no input whatsoever in the negotiation of the agreement. They have not been consulted. The people have not been consulted, and yet they will be bound, and tightly bound, by the outcome.

The agreement is too long and complicated for ordinary folk to read or understand. It is easy to tell lies about it, but valid interpretations are available to those who will listen. The deal on pharmaceutical products alone should be enough to turn Ontarians away from this agreement. Patents will now be protected for 20 years, but it was the now-threatened generic producers who were investing in creating jobs in Ontario and their products which were helping to keep down the cost of Ontario's drug benefit plan.

I had a bus company representative complaining to me in my riding that an Alberta company was encroaching unfairly on his territory. That's nothing compared to what will happen when any North American enterprise has to be treated the same as local firms. I believe in utilizing local firms wherever one happens to be. That's the way new, small enterprises get started and have a chance to compete. This concept of equal treatment is being carried to the point where people can be prosecuted for in some way coming between a would-be exploiter and that which he wants to exploit.

Environmentalists in BC, who don't want to see greedy outsiders or anyone else cut down our priceless heritage of old-growth forests, are already being sued. Where will insanity like this stop? Might we one day be prosecuted for living healthy lives and depriving drug companies of their expected market?

We're already committed incredibly to exporting energy to the United States, whether we want to or not, and at the same price we charge Canadians. Taxpayers here are paying to construct pipelines to take natural gas to the States. There has been talk of exporting water on a large scale. Nothing in NAFTA would prevent that. Will we one day send our Great Lakes water to California so they can grow vegetables to export back to us? Shall we as taxpayers have to pay for the megaprojects to achieve that? We have to have the right to make progress, progress in protecting our environment, in achieving full employment, in protecting workers' rights and labour standards, and in making sure that the high living standards made possible by modern technology and the resulting increased productivity per worker don't just lead to extreme wealth for the few and a life of poverty and misery for the rest of us.

With our new technology, we should all be able to live well without needing to work long hours and without needing to destroy our environment. We have the means as never before of making a good life for all, including the disabled and the elderly and yet we already see our living standards and our employment levels sliding. Don't let's give in without even a fight to the selfish few who want to exploit the rest of us. We have work to do to make this a better world for us and our children. Why should we surrender to faceless, non-elected officials the tools that we need to shape that world? We may never get another chance.

I was really proud of the big turnout in Peterborough when the cabinet committee came there and of the points that were raised. We shall keep up the fight.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I'm very pleased to rise today and speak on this issue. I have to say from the outset that I think we see a demonstration of intellectual dishonesty by the members of this government when they refuse to admit that free trade has in fact worked extremely well.

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): Withdraw. Apologize.

Mr Turnbull: Overwhelmingly, and it has already been spoken about from the government's own budget—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Please take your seat. I would ask the member to be careful in your choice of words. I just want to remind you, be careful in your choice of words.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Speaker, I would like to withdraw the word "intellectual."

The government has refused to admit that its own numbers indicate that exports are up. The numbers are very clear that since we've had the advent of free trade we have had greater exports to the US in history. We must first of all talk about what has happened with free trade before we move on to discussing NAFTA.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association survey, which was released in June 1992, said that more than half of those surveyed reported that they had had no lost market share in Canada, whilst 39% of them said that their exports to the US had grown, and that indeed is why the numbers are up.

What we are seeing with respect to job losses is quite clearly due to world restructuring. We heard the member for Wilson Heights debating earlier and pointing out the fact that you cannot blame free trade for the loss of jobs in Germany or Sweden or Japan. That's a fact. It is world restructuring. We live in a very different world and we must be competitive. The kind of competition that we have to provide is with high-tech jobs, with jobs that our people are trained for and must be better trained for. We cannot expect to be able to compete with the lowest-wage countries in the world in the low-scale jobs. That is a fact and that is a fact which has been accepted by Germany and Japan a long time ago.

1140

Turning to NAFTA, we must understand that 80% of all Mexican goods currently enter Canada duty-free. However, that is not the case of Canadian goods going into Mexico. The majority of Canadian goods are subject to fairly high tariffs. What does Mexico need? They need steel, they need financial services, they need transportation material, they need machinery, they need telecommunications, they need computers and they need cereals, all goods which Canada is extremely well positioned to provide them if we can remove those trade barriers. We see an excellent market opportunity with respect to Canada.

We haven't heard any statistics from the government which support its argument because quite frankly there are none. The fact is that we need to be competing in Mexico. You could say, "Well, we've got the free trade agreement with the US, and let Mexico have their NAFTA." The trouble with that argument is that what happens is we then have a hub and spoke situation where the US becomes the hub and it has free trade with Canada and also free trade with Mexico, but we do not have free trade with Mexico directly and Mexico with us. The essential element is access to the market, access which we are currently denied but which the Mexicans are not denied to our market. It has previously been said that if you go into Canadian supermarkets and look for Mexican products, and I absolutely agree, you will be hard pressed to find Mexican products, and you won't find Mexican high-tech products because there are none.

Let's just talk for the moment about one of the concerns that has been expressed, and it is a legitimate concern, and that is the environment. The suggestion is that if we allow Mexico into a trading relationship with the US and Canada, somehow our environmental standards are going to be dragged down. That is patently wrong. The reason for that, I will point out the fact: that it has been quite clearly identified that the countries with the lowest standards of environmental protection are very poor countries. Colin Isaacs, who is an expert on the environment, has pointed out the fact that those poor countries cannot afford to put in those environmental standards. However, Mexico has been making great strides in the last few years towards improving its environmental standards, and guess what? US, Canadian, European and Japanese companies that have moved into Mexico, to the greatest extent have applied the same environmental standards to their manufacturing that exist in their home markets, so we are in fact moving towards improving the environmental standards in Mexico. As we improve their standard of living, through freer trade, we will arrive at a point where they will be able to afford to improve—

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): At \$4 a day?

Mr Turnbull: Once again we have one of the

uninformed hyenas from the NDP screaming across the floor at the fact—he has no facts.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Let me read you part of the procedures and what it says so clearly. It's 23(k). Let me read it for all the members to understand what it is all about: "Uses abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder." That is very clear. So language used in the House should be honourable. I would ask you please to follow that.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Speaker, I would point out that the member for Durham East regularly screams across the floor.

Mr Mills: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member for York Mills called me a hyena, and I think that's unparliamentary and I ask him to withdraw that remark.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I did not hear that expression, but if he did say that, I would expect him to apologize.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Speaker, I withdraw that remark.

I will point out that this is a government that has said NAFTA would steal our blood, our water and our culture. There is absolutely no evidence of this. This is a government which set up a committee, at taxpayers' expense, with no members from the opposition on that committee, and from the very outset said that they were going to travel the province and find evidence against NAFTA. They said from the very outset that no matter what was said in evidence, they would still oppose NAFTA.

Now, Mr Speaker, I have a fundamental question for you: Is it right for taxpayers' money to be spent in this way, for the government to form its own committees to travel the province, ignoring the opposition and ignoring the input from those people who come forward to bring testimony? If they say from the outset that it doesn't matter, that they're going to oppose it, you really have to question why \$300,000 in such hard times would be frittered away in this way.

Let's just look further at the question of sovereignty. NAFTA provides for national treatment. National treatment: What does that mean? It means that the same rules apply to the country importing as the domestic companies. Funnily enough, they are the requirements of the GATT. Is this same government going to suggest that the GATT is a bad idea? I suppose they probably do, because they are flat-earth believers. They believe that if we continue to sail on, we're all going to fall off the edge of the world. Well, I've got news for you. We've found that it's a round earth, and you have to have a little bit more confidence in the future and at least base that confidence on the facts that have come to the fore since the free trade agreement has been put forward.

The Deputy Speaker: Your time has expired.

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): I've only got about three or four minutes. We're dividing the time equally among our caucus and I understand we have an agreement to give some time to the honourable member for St Catharines, Mr Bradley, as his caucus for some reason took all the time up on him. So let me make a couple of points very quickly.

Members opposite of the Conservative Party said a couple of things in their debate and I just want to touch on them really quickly.

They talk about intellectual dishonesty on the part of this government being opposed to NAFTA and talk about how the free trade agreement has worked so well. Well, I would like to say to the members of the third party that I wish you would go talk to the unemployed. I wish you would go and talk to the people in this province, all across this country, who have been directly affected because of the free trade agreement.

We need not go far. We can go to the Scarborough van plant just down the road here in Toronto. Here was a plant with 3,000 workers that was the most productive van plant, the most profitable van plant within the GM chain. We need to go look around St Catharines-Niagara Falls in regard to the glass plant that GM has, the block plant. The same story: the most profitable and the most productive and highest-quality plants they had in the GM chain. They were closed. I wonder why?

They were closed simply because of one reason, because of the rules now, because of the dismantling of the Foreign Investment Review Agency that those scoundrels in Ottawa allowed to happen, and I call them scoundrels, Mr Speaker. Sorry if it's unparliamentary. I'll sort of withdraw it, but I'm kind of upset.

The other point in regard to the free trade agreement is that it allowed those companies to say, "We are no longer going to take a look at a Canadian content policy. We're going to take that away because we lost it under the dismantling of FIRA and we've lost it under the FTA."

It came down to this: GM had plants somewhere in the United States, and in some cases in Mexico, depending on what plant we're taking about, that had a larger production capacity than some of the plants that we had here in Canada. Then it became a question, "I can fit my small plant into my bigger plant," and it was strictly a decision on the part of GM in order to rationalize its operation. But under the old rules, before free trade, before the Tories came to Ottawa, they could have never done that.

1150

So shame on you, you Conservative people, for suggesting that free trade has no effect on the workers of this province. If Ontario finds itself, like the rest of this country, having to deal with the mess that we're in right now with the lack of revenue, where we are in

regard to expenditures, it's because there are less people working.

The problem we have in this province, like the problem we have across this country, is a problem of joblessness. When people don't have work and they don't have income, they don't pay taxes, and then it costs the government a heck of a lot more money. Why are we there? Not because of Bob Rae's socialist Ontario. I would directly say because of Brian Mulroney's vision of a multinational agenda being instituted in Canada, and shame on you for that.

I've still got a minute left; I'm doing well.

The other thing I would like to say in regard to the NAFTA committee that the province of Ontario put forward is that one of the things they said was that the government had no business putting together the NAFTA committee because, after all, this was a federal issue, and why would the provincial government even get involved? It was none of our business.

NAFTA directly goes to the heart of the powers of the provincial governments of Canada on a number of fronts, and I don't have time to list them. Do you know what the sad part is? It's that with the industry within Ontario and Canada, the third party, and in some cases the Liberals, said we didn't have the business to do this. They said we should just sit there and not say anything.

Unfortunately, the only people who may turn this thing down in the end are our American brothers on the other side of the river who are turning around and saying NAFTA's not a good idea for the United States either. Now we see the American administration trying to put side deals on NAFTA because it's so God-awful. They also recognize what it means to their economy.

With that, Mr Speaker, I'm going to end. We don't have enough time. I cede the floor to the other member, but I'm firmly opposed to NAFTA, firmly opposed to the Tory agenda, and will be proudly voting in favour of this motion.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): May I ask for consent to use two minutes of the NDP time?

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to use two minutes from the government side? There is unanimous consent.

Mr Bradley: I want to thank the members in the New Democratic Party for that opportunity to take two minutes. I simply want to address my remarks to the member and to this resolution, in favour of the resolution.

I think the member deserves credit for bringing this resolution forward, because it is an issue which is very important to the province of Ontario.

As the former Environment minister in this province, I recognize, and members have mentioned this, the pressure that there will be on Canada, and Ontario as well, as part of Canada, to lower our environmental

standards because we'll be facing Mexican environmental standards. That would be very detrimental.

In addition to that, we have labour laws in Ontario, laws that have been fought for over the years, that do not correspond to those in Mexico. It is my view that, again, it would be detrimental to people in Ontario, particularly those who are protected by labour legislation, if they were forced to compete with those who don't have the same kind of legislation; in Mexico, for instance.

In addition to that, I recognize that President Clinton is having second thoughts about this particular agreement. If we look at what's happened with the free trade agreement and its contents and its lack of clarity and lack of sanctions for those who would violate it, we see that we are presiding over the de-industrialization of the province of Ontario and much of Canada. Much of that can be attributed to the free trade agreement, the specific agreement that was signed by our federal government with the federal government of the United States.

The last point I would make is that there was not sufficient opportunity in the federal House to debate this particular issue. Members were limited to about 10 minutes apiece, and it was rammed through by the federal government without the necessity of ramming it through. For this reason, I think it's opportune for this House to express its view on this issue, and I intend to vote for the resolution which is brought forward by the member for Lambton.

Mr Marchese: I strongly support this bill and will make some comments with respect to it.

The Canada-US free trade agreement has devastated Ontario unlike any other province—it's devastated Ontario—and the North American free trade agreement will make it worse; it will not make it better.

Trade should not be an end in itself. It should, as the Premier said, improve the quality of life for all Ontarians, for all Canadians. It has not done that and it will not do that.

Let's look at some of the things that the free trade agreement was supposed to do. I want to speak to that in order to bring some clarity that I don't think Mr Kwinter was able to bring.

It's difficult to separate with scientific accuracy the effects on the Ontario economy of the recession and the high dollar on the one hand, and the effects of FTA. It's true that it's difficult. We suspect the high dollar's had a devastating effect. We suspect that the recession has had a terrible effect on our economy; we know that. But it's fair to say and fairly accurate to say that we lost anywhere from 50,000 to 100,000 jobs just because of free trade. Many, many people will agree to that.

What we say is that the architects of the free trade agreement claimed there would be more jobs in Ontario

and throughout Canada. That's what they said. It isn't true. It hasn't happened. They also said that some of the studies that some of these people on the other side alluded to predicted growth in Canadian manufacturing employment of 15%, 20% or higher. That hasn't happened. It's a lie. There are no studies to support it. In fact, what we have is evidence of losses of jobs, and the North American free trade agreement will do that as well.

Remember the adjustment program? The federal government said, "We will give money for adjustments in the event of job losses." There weren't any dollars and the workers of Ontario had to shoulder those costs. Under the North American free trade agreement, there will be further losses and we will have to shoulder those losses as well. This North American free trade agreement is going to devastate the people of Ontario, our economy, our investment and our sovereignty.

The Deputy Speaker: Your time has expired. The member for Lambton, you have two minutes to reply.

Mrs MacKinnon: I wish to thank all members for participating in the debate. This is obviously a subject that can bring out the best and the worst in people.

As a member of a farming community, I would like you to consider the following things.

Interjections.

Mrs MacKinnon: Yes, you're the one who said I was going to sit for five years.

I would like you to consider the following as a farmer. The farmers in Lambton county are devastated this week, particularly the pork producers in my riding and across Ontario and Canada. They are reeling from the latest decision made by the panel earlier this week that sided with the US Department of Commerce.

The US claimed that live hogs exported from Canada to the US in 1989-90 were subject to countervailable duty rates, because of our national tripartite system, to the tune of some \$20 million. This is devastating to farmers all across Ontario and all across Canada.

How can we possibly stand here and defend something like the North American free trade system? The constant harassment of our hog and pork industries has not been ended by the free trade deal. Indeed, there seems to be a flagrant disregard of this deal by many American industries and within the US government.

Once again, I thank the members very much for this debate. I believe it has been worthwhile. And thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for putting up with the House this morning.

The Deputy Speaker: The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): There's time left, Mr Speaker. I'll use it.

The Deputy Speaker: It's their time.

Mr Stockwell: I may be one of them for all you know.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?
Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles Morin): We will deal first with ballot item number 15 standing in the name of Mr Murdoch.

If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Mr Murdoch has moved private member's resolution number 14. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1200 to 1205.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until your name is called.

Ayes

Arnott, Bradley, Callahan, Caplan, Carr, Carter, Cousens, Cunningham, Curling, Daigeler, Drainville, Eves, Harnick, Harris, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kormos, Lessard, Mahoney, Malkowski, Mammoliti, McLean, Mills, Morrow, Murdoch (Grey), Runciman, Sorbara, Stockwell, Tilson, Turnbull, Villeneuve, Wilson (Simcoe

West).

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until your name is called.

Nays

Abel, Bisson, Cooper, Coppen, Dadamo, Duignan, Frankford, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Hope, Klopp, MacKinnon, Marchese, Martin, Mathysen, Murdock (Sudbury), North, Owens, Rizzo, Wessinger, White, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Winninger, Wiseman, Wood.

The Deputy Speaker: The ayes are 32; the nays are 28. I declare the motion carried.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We will now deal with ballot item number 16 standing in the name of Mrs MacKinnon.

If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Mrs MacKinnon has moved private member's resolution number 15. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion, please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1209 to 1214.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until their name is called.

Ayes

Abel, Akande, Bisson, Bradley, Callahan, Caplan, Carter, Cooper, Coppen, Curling, Dadamo, Duignan, Fletcher, Frankford, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Kormos, Lessard, MacKinnon, Malkowski, Marchese, Martin, Mathyssen, Mills, Morrow,

Murdock (Sudbury), North, Owens, Rizzo, Wessenger, White, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wiseman, Wood.

Nays

Arnott, Carr, Cunningham, Daigeler, Harnick, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Murdoch (Grey), Sorbara, Stockwell, Tilson, Turnbull, Wilson (Simcoe West).

The Deputy Speaker: The ayes being 39 and the nays 13, I declare the motion carried.

All matters relating to private members' business are now completed. I will now leave the chair and the House will resume at 1:30 this afternoon.

The House recessed at 1218.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): It is with great pleasure that I rise today in the House to pay tribute to the Toronto Maple Leafs, for whom we had a reception.

Not since the days of Darryl Sittler, the Tiger, Lanny McDonald and Borje Salming has the city of Toronto been so completely galvanized in support of their team.

It was not only the success of the Buds in the playoffs which captured the imaginations of so many hockey fans but the manner in which it was executed.

Led by the likes of Doug Gilmour and Félix Potvin, this team truly exhibited grit—as a Liberal, I appreciate that—determination and heart. These are the qualities that are the most important to speak of when one recalls the success of this year's team. When one considers that the most avid, enthusiastic and energetic of all hockey fans across this province are, at the same time, our most precious resource—children—the importance of these qualities becomes magnified.

I would think that we would all agree that no matter the area of human endeavour, if one approaches it with dedication and a belief in oneself, success and pride will certainly follow.

In this light, I suppose we all owe a special thank you to coach Burns who taught all of us that having the temperament of a human furnace can pay huge dividends in terms of extracting a team effort from all players.

So I say to the Toronto Maple Leafs: Congratulations and good luck, especially those concerned with the ceremonies being conducted tonight at the Metro Convention Centre. Who knows, perhaps a few familiar faces from this year's team calendar will not only be at today's opening ceremonies at the corner of Front and Yonge but some day permanent residents.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I'm pleased to join and extend my congratulations with other members of this House to the Toronto Maple Leafs for an outstanding season this year.

Today I had the honour of attending a reception and buffet lunch here at Queen's Park to honour the 1992-93 Toronto Maple Leafs.

I want to thank the team, its coach, Pat Burns, and manager Cliff Fletcher for giving Toronto eight months of spectacular hockey. We watched eagerly in front of our TV sets and at the Gardens as the team played 21 games in 42 exhausting nights.

The Leafs took the Norris division, finishing Detroit and St Louis in seven games before facing the LA

Kings in the Campbell conference. It was an exciting and remarkable journey.

The Leafs were a tremendous boost to tourism in Toronto. Restaurants, taverns, retail establishments and hotels all profited from the success that the team enjoyed.

Fans will have many fond memories of the guts, passion, heart and desire which the Leafs displayed over the course of their season and in the playoffs. I think Mike Foligno expressed the sentiments of Maple Leafs fans perfectly when he told reporters after the final game, "When you sit and you look at how far this team has come in such a short time, nothing leaves this room but pride."

I know that I speak for all members of the House when I say, congratulations to the Toronto Maple Leafs for creating magic on ice.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Tony Rizzo (Oakwood): I rise today to state my position on the social contract issue.

We must not forget that generations of Ontarians have worked hard to create our unique system of public services. We must not forget above all, and I quote from the Public Service Coalition proposal text, that "the people of Ontario elected this government in part because of the strong New Democratic commitment to public services.

"In this critical time, when workers, families and communities have been put under enormous economic strain...the people of Ontario are counting on the Ontario government to protect and improve public services."

Ontarians understand that to protect and improve public services we have to control the deficit. What is paramount for our government is the general interest of all citizens. I know and understand very well the union movement's feelings towards the government's initiatives, and I praise the unions' contribution to the bargaining process. I'm sure that a little more goodwill on all sides will result in successful negotiations during the next period.

More cooperation in more areas between government, public and private employers and the union movement is the key to the success of contemporary states. Eventually, labour will become a full partner in the decision-making process under any government. It is time the union movement is recognized as a legitimate presence at all tables where important decisions are made, inside and outside the workplace.

HEALTH CARDS

Mr Gilles E. Morin (Carleton East): The Minister of Health recently admitted that the cost of fraud related

to health cards is at least \$20 million. Other estimates say that fraud costs the taxpayers of Ontario hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

The Provincial Auditor's 1992 report raised a number of concerns: the inaccuracy of registration information, the lack of a formal process to ensure regular updates of information, the issuance of thousands of cards more than there are persons in Ontario, the lack of an adequate system of control that would allow health care providers to verify the validity of health cards.

The government of Ontario intends to cut over a billion dollars in health care services. Instead of addressing directly and swiftly the issue of fraud and the abuse of our health system, the Minister of Health chooses to control the number of physicians allowed to practise. She chooses to close hospitals. She will soon dictate the conditions surrounding the delivery of medical services. How long will it be before she starts issuing prescriptions?

I recently introduced the Health Insurance Amendment Act, 1993. Bill 44 is supported by the Ontario Medical Association. It will reduce fraud, improve the administration of health cards and save costs. The time has come for a new health card with photo identification and expiry date.

AVALON RETIREMENT LODGE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I'm pleased to bring to the attention of this House the 10th anniversary of the Avalon Retirement Lodge in my riding of Dufferin-Peel. The anniversary marks a milestone for the Avalon retirement home as it continually strives to achieve high standards for both its residents and staff. The work of everyone involved should be acknowledged. The staff have, in a time of restraint, shown how the needs of the residents and the imposed rules from Queen's Park can somehow be juggled to accommodate everyone.

I have an opportunity to personally see the commitment and professionalism of the staff at the Avalon on a regular basis. I would like to offer my personal thanks to the staff for going above and beyond the call of duty, so to speak, in serving their customers, the seniors. It is very appropriate that Avalon retirement home is celebrating its 10th anniversary in June, during Seniors' Month.

I would also like this government to realize that Avalon retirement centre is an example where private enterprise can and does operate a seniors' home admirably within the very stringent guidelines of the Ministry of Health, and indeed does so very well. We should be holding up these enterprises as examples of standards to achieve as being province-wide, and not force them out of business by unbalanced funding and unnecessary administrative duties.

TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS

Mr Peter North (Elgin): Today it is with great

pride and pleasure that I stand on behalf of the government of Ontario to heartily congratulate the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey organization for a tremendous year. We had the pleasure of welcoming them to this Legislature today.

The people of the province, and indeed across Canada, were given a special gift this year as they sat glued to their television sets witnessing a certain mix of youth, experience, talent and heart. This group of players and management personnel took us back to the glory years as they worked us through the Detroit series, powered us through the St Louis series to the Norris division championship. Next came the Kings in LA, where our team took it to the seventh game and the last minute, within one minute of the Campbell conference championship and the Stanley Cup finals.

Although it was a special time for the members of this club, it is hard to put into words the meaning of your accomplishment to the youth of this province. All over the cities, towns and villages there still continue today the screams and yells and cheers of young boys and girls playing road hockey, emulating and acting their favourite players and their favourite plays of a certain game that shone in their minds. Your accomplishments gave them pride, hope and an image to look up to that knows no boundaries and crosses all lines.

A special thanks to Steve Stavro, Cliff Fletcher, Pat Burns and staff for presenting us with a team of this calibre, and the support they extend to this organization.

The fans of the Toronto Maple Leafs and hockey as a whole at all levels have been treated to something very special, something we will not soon forget.

We look forward to great things in the future. We look forward to the screams and yells of young people, later in the spring, playing road hockey and cheering for their favourite team, the Toronto Maple Leafs.

1340

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Orlino): Yesterday I asked my Tory friends where they stand on the social contract legislation. Judging from question period yesterday, the Conservatives are still talking out of both sides of their mouth. When the NDP began the social contract negotiations, Mike Harris told Bob Rae that he could count on his party's support. By the end of April, Harris said: "I will support your legislation. Bang, bang, bang, first, second, third reading." But by May they had changed their tune.

Members of the Conservative caucus said, and I quote: "This process is flawed from the beginning. It's a fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants process." One week Mike Harris says, "I support the social contract talks"—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Willowdale.

Mrs Caplan: —the next week Mike Harris says—
Interjection.

The Speaker: The member for Willowdale, please come to order.

Mrs Caplan: —“We told you the social contract talks could not possibly succeed.”

On Monday, June 14, the Conservatives said they might support the legislation in principle. Yesterday Mike Harris said in one question, “You have our support,” and in the very next question he was critical of the legislation. I want to know, where do the Conservatives stand on the social contract legislation, Bill 48?

We have an NDP government that makes policy changes with the wind, with help of course from opinion polls. It seems that the Tories are no better.

I ask them—now that Lyn McLeod has explained it to you; I hope you realize this draconian legislation is bad, bad, bad—where are you? Where do you stand? The people of Ontario want to know.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Leeds-Grenville has the floor.

POLITICAL MEETING

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): This weekend the provincial council of Ontario's New Disintegrating Party will meet in Gananoque, in my picturesque riding of Leeds-Grenville. On their heels will be an angry horde of the brothers and sisters burning their NDP membership cards to protest Premier Rae's offer of “take it now or we'll just take it all later.”

This event, which promises to be half soap opera and half circus, will I hope be all profit for Gananoque tourism operators, who have seen their trade decline by 33% in the last four years. It is ironic that the NDP government will do more to help the local economy by having a political barbecue serving Bobby on a bun than it ever did through any of its half-baked economic initiatives.

It is our hope that the influx of these protesters will more than double the town's population on Saturday and that they will be as generous in their contributions to the coffers of local businesses as they once were in their contributions to the coffers of the NDP.

So on behalf of Gananoque, known as the Gateway to the Thousand Islands, I'd like to say welcome to CUPE's Sid Ryan, to OPSEU's Fred Upshaw and to all those protesters who will be travelling with them. Bring your spouses, bring your kids. What the heck, you can even bring a Liberal, because they really know how to spend and abuse a credit card.

Take a leisurely boat tour of the Thousand Islands. Visit the Thousand Islands Wild Kingdom or take in a play at the Thousand Islands Playhouse. Bring your

money and stay the weekend.

FOLKLORE FESTIVAL

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I rise today to recognize Folklore, an annual multicultural festival that took place in Kingston last weekend. For the \$6 price of a passport—children under 12 free—visitors could tour 17 countries at nine locations throughout the community.

The kickoff occurred the previous Sunday with a colourful, vibrant parade down Princess Street to city hall. In touring the pavilions, I was impressed by the opportunities for people of all ages to participate in cultural activities from preparing food to singing and dancing. Especially noticeable were the many children who were performing dances that were a tribute to the skill and dedication of both dancers and instructors. Looking forward to what these young dancers will be performing in years to come is delightful indeed.

Something new this year was the multicultural pavilion at the Memorial Centre. Here at one location, people could watch a variety of performances on centre stage while enjoying samosas at the Indian pavilion, spring rolls at the Chinese, Turkish coffee and Spanish pizza. There were also displays by the board of education, the mayor's advisory committee and the police advisory committee.

I applaud the organizers of the Folklore festival who have worked hard with the many volunteers who prepared food, staffed booths and performed to bring many hours of enjoyment to area residents. They provide a model of showing how everyone in the community benefits when people from diverse backgrounds work together. I'm pleased to say that the crowds were larger this year, boding well for an even more successful Folklore in 1994.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

COMPENSATION FOR WRONGFUL CONVICTION

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I would like to inform members today that a compensation package has been awarded to Mr Richard Norris, who was convicted and imprisoned for a crime he did not commit.

Mr Norris was found guilty on February 5, 1980, of break, enter and indecent assault on a female and was sentenced to 23 months in jail. He served a total of eight months and 10 days of his sentence before being released on parole. Mr Norris has always maintained his innocence.

Ten years later, in November 1989, James Anderson confessed to Richard Norris that he had committed the offences. Following a police investigation, Mr Anderson was charged, tried and convicted.

On November 29, 1991, Mr Norris's conviction was overturned and an acquittal was entered. He then

became eligible for compensation under the 1988 federal-provincial guidelines for wrongfully convicted and incarcerated persons. Mr Norris's case is the first in Ontario in which the guidelines have been used to compensate an individual wrongfully convicted and imprisoned.

The guidelines provide for compensation for persons wrongfully convicted and imprisoned as a result of a conviction for a Criminal Code or other federal penal offence. Compensation would only be made in cases of individuals who were innocent of the crime and where a new or newly discovered fact showed that there had been a miscarriage of justice. The guidelines themselves set out the prerequisites for compensation.

Despite the many safeguards in Canada's criminal justice system, innocent persons are occasionally convicted and imprisoned. This is one unfortunate case where the system failed.

There is no question that Mr Norris suffered a grave miscarriage of justice. It has been submitted that Mr Norris's incarceration had a devastating effect on him psychologically, as a consequence of which he lost his job and continues to suffer a loss of income.

Our government is pleased to announce that a compensation package totalling \$412,616 has been provided to Mr Norris in recognition of the pain and loss of income he has sustained as a result of this miscarriage of justice. We sincerely hope that this payment, shared equally by the provincial and federal governments, will reflect the governments' desire to act on humanitarian grounds and respond to some of the consequences of Mr Norris's ordeal.

The compensation package reflects medical evidence to the effect that there has been a substantial loss of past and future income as a result of incarceration and the subsequent effect on Mr Norris's psychological health.

Of the total sum, Mr Norris has already received advance payments of \$90,000 over the last year and a half to assist him during the compensation process. In addition to the compensation package, he has received an amount to cover reasonable and proper legal fees and disbursements.

There is no doubt that the eyewitness identification by the victim of Mr Norris was complicated by the fact of his close physical resemblance to Mr Anderson. Police, the crown attorney and Mr Norris's defence lawyer have stated that there is no doubt in their minds that the victim was absolutely certain that it was Richard Norris who had attacked her.

The Ministry of the Attorney General has concluded that the cause of Richard Norris's wrongful conviction must be attributed in large measure to the well-known dangers inherent in eyewitness identification. Erroneous eyewitness identification is probably the single greatest

cause of wrongful convictions. For this reason, law reformers, academics, jurists and government commissions have not only warned of the danger of such evidence but have also attempted to provide certain safeguards for use in the judicial process to minimize the risk of wrongful conviction based on such honest but mistaken eyewitness identifications.

1350

As a result, the ministry has recommended that a federal-provincial-territorial working group be appointed to examine the area of identification evidence with a view to amending the Criminal Code and other federal statutes to provide for safeguards against wrongful convictions based solely or largely on eyewitness evidence. The Law Reform Commission of Canada, in a report published in 1983, made recommendations to attempt to reduce the potential for wrongful conviction in cases based largely on eyewitness identification, and its recommendations provide an excellent starting point in this much-needed area of criminal law reform.

The ministry has also recommended that crown attorney education provide for an awareness of the potential for wrongful conviction based solely or largely on eyewitness identification, the unreliability, in many cases, of eyewitness identification, including the causes of such unreliability, and the need for law reform in this area. Furthermore, the ministry has recommended that a federal-provincial working group be asked to reconsider the guidelines on compensation in light of the experience gained in this first case. I fully support these recommendations.

I cannot begin to imagine the trauma Mr Norris has suffered as a result of this ordeal. I realize that it would be impossible for anyone to eradicate these tragic events. However, I do hope that the compensation package may alleviate to some extent the suffering of Mr Norris and his family.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I rise to applaud the minister for taking this step. I think it's clear that when anyone in the criminal justice system is wrongfully convicted, it brings the whole system into doubt and, to some degree, disrepute. I think we have to be concerned as a Legislature and people responsible for the system of law in this province that that does not continue. There has recently been an unfortunate spate, it seems to me, of these wrongful convictions, and I think it is worthwhile to take a look at those aspects of our criminal justice system that have given rise to wrongful convictions.

Let me say in that regard that I think there was to a certain degree an amount of strangeness involved in recommending reconsidering the guidelines after only the first use, but I think there are places to look for some recommendations in that regard.

I'm sure the minister is aware of the results of the Marshall inquiry and the recommendations it made, and

I think there are some sensible ones that can be looked at. They've recommended that these issues be determined by judicial inquiry and that there be no pre-set limit on those compensation awards. As I'm sure she's aware, the guidelines currently provide for a limit, at least with respect to non-pecuniary losses, and I think we should look carefully at the Marshall inquiry results in that regard.

This gives rise to the issue of victims not just of the criminal justice system but of crime. We have in the standing committee on administration of justice been considering a bill of rights for victims of crime, and I would ask the Attorney General to look at this in terms of victims of the criminal justice system in the broad sense.

We have been talking in that committee about the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. Frankly, some of what we've seen is appalling. People have written to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board asking for compensation as victims of crime and have received letters back from that board saying: "We've received your application. Don't call us for six months." That is entirely unacceptable.

In addition, the delay in proceeding with applications is 12 to 18 months, and that too is unacceptable. If we are to create a sense of fairness, a sense of confidence in our justice system, we have to remember the victims of crime. I am entirely concerned that this government has not taken the steps necessary to recognize that the victims of crime are part of this system and need to be recognized, I think through some kind of mechanism that recognizes their involvement in the system. It could be a bill of rights for victims of crime; at least the principles involved in that kind of legislation should be applied.

There was a federal-provincial agreement in that regard, and I believe Ontario and Alberta are the only two provinces that haven't legislated those guidelines in some form. While this circumstance is a good one, I think it raises the issue of dealing with victims of the criminal justice system in a broader sense, and I think this government should take a move in that regard. Those are my comments.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): I'd like to address this. This gentleman was a constituent in my riding. Although I applaud what the Ministry of the Attorney General finally did, this man and his family were put through sheer hell trying to receive compensation.

I suggest that in a case where the acquittal is not just a finding of not guilty as a result of some failure on the part of the crown to put in evidence or that it put in inappropriate evidence but where it was based on another person coming forward and indicating that he committed the crime, there should not have been the delay, the dragging of the heels by the government.

Certainly, in other areas, if it were based on inadmissible evidence or whatever, then there is a reason perhaps for investigating it more thoroughly. But I can tell you that this gentleman's lawyer visited me on a number of occasions and sent me letters indicating the sheer agony his family went through. In fact, at one point I believe this gentleman was very close to suicide because of the delay of this government in terms of compensating him.

In the final analysis, I would say to you that if this doesn't tell us and reinforce, certainly my belief, that capital punishment is not an appropriate remedy—and I hope it will never be brought back in, because juries do make mistakes.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): Unlike my Liberal counterparts, I am not going to applaud the minister for something that cried out to be done, for something that was obvious to be done, and for something that took such a long time in the circumstances.

What I will say is what this is really all about: It's all about individual rights and it's all about the importance of the state recognizing that when it makes a mistake it has to correct it, but that it should correct it in a timely way.

The other ironic things about this that bother me are that this gentleman went to jail for a crime he did not commit and the person who committed the crime ended up going to jail for less time than the person wrongly identified. What does that say about the justice system in the province of Ontario?

I'll read to you what the Elora Sentinel said:

"Norris is...bitter that Anderson received a more lenient sentence than he did.

"Norris was sentenced to 23 months; 12 years later, Anderson was sentenced to 15 months.

"Norris spent nine months behind bars, and lost his job;" for a crime he didn't commit, "12 years later, Anderson," who was given a more lenient sentence, "was granted day parole so that he could continue" working.

What does that say about the justice system in the province of Ontario?

The real difficulty we have here will not be solved by changing the rules of evidence to make sure that people who are identified are not identified wrongly, or setting into place safeguards for that problem. The problem we have in this province is that the administration of justice is under terrible pressure.

We saw in this Legislature about three years ago some 50,000, 60,000, 70,000 cases that were Askoved because they took too long to reach court. The Attorney General of that day spent \$50 million to rectify that situation. He rectified that situation by throwing money at it, and now, three years later, the same backlogs continue to exist in the courts. We jettisoned 50,000 cases. They're all back, and the present minister is

sitting on the Martin report, which has now been available for several weeks; it hasn't been released. We in the opposition have not been given the courtesy of taking a look at that report, although I know it's been off to the printers for several weeks.

That report is the first attempt to try to streamline the justice system in the province of Ontario; I don't know why the delay continues and continues and continues. We are back to where we were when Askov was decided. If we want to look at why a person like Mr Norris ended up in the situation he was in, it's exactly because the justice system can no longer carry the volume we're trying to make it carry, unless it's streamlined.

The other thing is that I have some real reservations as to whether this gentleman has in the end been treated fairly. I understand this gentleman may never work again or may never be able to hold a job on a permanent basis. If he has 20 more years in his working-life expectancy and he's going to make the poverty level of income for him and his family, which is \$20,000, a \$400,000 settlement is nothing to write home about, particularly when you consider that some of that is for his pain and suffering and some of that certainly should represent interest on the money.

I would tell my good friend the Attorney General that I don't think this is the most generous offer that could be made in this situation. The state has got to compensate him fairly. I know that this is not just the provincial government, that it's the federal government as well. I think the Attorney General of Ontario should take the lead in making sure that this gentleman is compensated properly. I don't believe he is.

1400

WITHDRAWAL OF BILL

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): On Wednesday, June 16, the member for Welland-Thorold, Mr Kormos, introduced a bill entitled An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act. It has been brought to my attention that this bill is in unilingual format only, which is contrary to subsection 3(2) of the French Language Services Act, 1986. I must therefore advise the House that this bill contravenes standing order 38(d) and must be removed from the order paper.

It is now time for oral questions and the honourable member for Scarborough-Agincourt.

ORAL QUESTIONS

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Premier, and it has to do with, I guess, really the vision that you have for the province.

You will know, Premier, that in your budget you call for an unemployment rate this year of 14%. The Premier's shaking his head, but it's in your budget, 14%. As

you look ahead at the unemployment rate over the next two years, by 1995, it is still running at 12%, over 700,000 people unemployed; still by 1995, roughly the same number. This, to us, is intolerable. It's a disgrace: It is unacceptable. I would hope it's unacceptable to you.

My question is this: Why should the people of Ontario have to live with your economic plans that call for and state we will have an unemployment rate this year at 14%, and by 1995 it will still be running well above 12%?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I think the member is focusing on the issue which is the issue we all want to focus on and that's the issue of work and jobs.

I would say to him very directly that I would never at any time call for rates of unemployment anywhere in the ballpark that the member is describing; neither does our budget call for these kinds of rates. What we are facing in a province of 10 million people, in a country of nearly 30 million people and in a North America of 300 million people is an economic reality that we're trying to change and that we're seeking to change in cooperation with the federal government and in cooperation with the G-7 meeting that's going to be taking place in Tokyo.

I happen to believe that there's a major economic challenge for all of us. It's an issue that I discussed with the Secretary of Labor in the United States on Tuesday, Secretary Reich. We both agreed that the rates of unemployment that we're facing in this country and in his country are unacceptably high, and that we have to find new and better ways of creating more employment and more opportunity. I don't know of anybody in government who isn't preoccupied with this question of how we can create more work.

I would say to the honourable member that I'm sure he'll have criticisms and positive suggestions to make and I look forward to hearing what they are, but I want to say to him there is no monopoly on any side of the House with respect to dealing with this question and dealing with this issue.

Our rates in this province obviously follow and flow from the overall economic situation in North America and the overall situation in the OECD countries.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: This government has stood out among all the jurisdictions in emphasizing the importance of controlling the operating costs of government, investing in infrastructure and doing everything we can to help those people who have been affected by the kinds of economic changes we've seen. We stand out in North America, we stand out among OECD countries in leading the way in terms of infrastructure investment and in terms of dealing with operating costs.

The Speaker: Could the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: I'm proud of our record as a government in dealing with these issues.

Mr Phillips: You may be proud of it, but I think it's a disgrace. It used to be that Ontario had the lowest rate of unemployment in the country. Now every province west of here has a lower rate. You can stand up here and speak proudly about a 14% unemployment rate, but I think it's a disgrace. If you're proud of your record, then I think you should be ashamed of yourself. The 14% unemployed will have real problems in dealing with the Premier.

We heard today, Premier, from responsible people in the business community that your budget is going to kill jobs. When you were talking out of the other side of your mouth, when you were in opposition, you said, "Listen, Treasurer, when you raise taxes, you cost jobs." That's when you were talking out of the other side of your mouth. Now that you're Premier, you're going to find that tax increases cost jobs.

I'll go back again. How can you justify 14%? That's not me speaking. That is the number in your budget. This is what you predict for the future. I say it's a disgrace. If you want to stand up and say you're proud of it, I want you to explain to the people of Ontario why you can accept a 14% unemployment rate in 1993 in the province of Ontario.

Hon Mr Rae: First of all, the rate is not 14%, and the member knows it.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): Yes, it is.

Hon Mr Rae: No, it isn't. Come on, get real for a minute.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: Let's take it seriously. I couldn't join the Linda Leatherdale reception at lunch, but I understand the member was received with appropriate comments from the crowd. I want him to know the Liberal Party has no particular monopoly on this.

Neither does the Conservative Party and neither do we. We're wrestling with a difficult situation. I would say to the honourable member, look at what we've done: a billion dollars in money that we are putting into training, the amount that we are putting into investment infrastructure, the efforts that we're making.

I would say to you that if the Liberal Party is now, after its record in government, turning around and saying, "Put us back in because we're going to be the no-tax party as well," let me tell you, you have zero credibility on that with people in the business community or anywhere else.

I speak to bankers, I speak to industrialists, and the one thing the senior leaders of business say consistently to me is: "Premier, you are making a start where no

other government was prepared to move. In particular, you're moving where the Liberal government would never have done things." The Peterson government would never have had the courage to face up to the challenges we've had to face. You have zero credibility with the business community when it comes to dealing with these issues. None at all. None.

Mr Phillips: The Premier can shout and he can yell and he can finger-point. But it is your words, Premier, in your budget that say: "During the recession many workers have given up looking for work. If these discouraged workers were counted as unemployed, Ontario's current unemployment rate would be 14%." That's your budget. That's what you say: 14%. Now you get up and yell and scream that it's acceptable. It isn't acceptable to us and the Liberal Party. When you became Premier, the unemployment rate in this province was 6%. There was no other province that had a lower unemployment rate.

You want to go and blame free trade and blame the federal government. You had the lowest unemployment rate in the country. Now, for the 700,000 people who are out of work, I want to know—you promised that the unemployment rate now would be 8.5%. Those plans have failed. Will you now acknowledge that your plans haven't worked and will you bring forward some plans that are going to reduce the unemployment rate below this unacceptable 14%?

Hon Mr Rae: I don't think there's a soul in this province who believes the kind of old-style politics and the kind of old-style arguments you're putting forward. This is the same group that called the election after two and a half years or two and three quarter years in office, knowing what was happening with the recession, and going before the people and parading, saying: "Look at us. We've got a balanced budget. How wonderful we are."

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): New-style politics is to shoot your friends. New-style politics is to promise one thing and do another. New-style products is to destroy collective bargaining.

The Speaker: Order, the member for York Centre.

Hon Mr Rae: The people didn't believe you then and they're not going to believe you now, because it doesn't add up, it doesn't make any sense.

1410

Interjections.

The Speaker: I ask the member for York Centre to please withdraw the unparliamentary remark.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Rae: I say to the honourable member that if you look at the money that we put into capital, the money that we put into Jobs Ontario Homes, Jobs Ontario Youth, Jobs Ontario Training and Jobs Ontario Community Action, we are doing everything we can to

address the unemployment issue. We are going to be working with other governments to do it.

I would say to the honourable member that it is a fact of life that it is going to be a world problem with a world challenge. We are dealing with it here. We are taking on the role here. We are dealing with it around the globe. Those are the facts of the situation and that's what we are facing up to, and we are facing up to it in an honest and direct way.

No other government in recent years has had the courage to say, "Yes, there are some workers who've given up because of what's happened in the economy." I don't remember any Liberal budget ever talking about that fact, and don't tell me that it's a fact that started in 1990. It's been a fact of life—

The Speaker: Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —that's been there in the economy for years and years and years. We're the party that's facing up to it. You're the ones who are pretending, "Vote for us, free beer tomorrow." That's the Liberal slogan, "Free beer tomorrow." Nobody believes that kind of old politics any more, not a soul. Not a soul goes for that stuff.

The Speaker: Could the Premier please conclude his response. New question, the member for Mississauga West.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Mississauga West has the floor.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): It's interesting to me to hear the Premier shouting that we shouldn't make this a partisan issue, and yet instead of answering the very serious concerns about unemployment from our Treasury critic—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): To whom is your question directed?

Mr Mahoney: My question is to the Premier, and maybe he can answer my question without pointing partisan fingers—maybe.

Yesterday my leader, Lyn McLeod, asked the Premier to explain to this House how the municipalities, the school boards, the universities, the colleges and the transfer partners that the Premier always refers to can make the cuts under this legislation known as Bill 48, when they've already implemented wage freezes and they've already implemented unpaid leave within the organizations that they control.

The Premier responded, "Where people have already made a substantial sacrifice or where they have already taken steps...obviously that is a factor that would have to be taken into account."

What do you mean, Premier, when you say "taken

into account"? Are the transfer partners that have already implemented wage freezes and already negotiated unpaid leave with their workers going to have to make further cuts, as set out in Bill 48? Are they indeed going to have their transfer payments from you to them cut? Premier, what's your answer to that?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I think the answer to the member's question is exactly the same as the one I gave to the Leader of the Opposition yesterday. It is the same question, so I would imagine that the same answer would apply, and that is that as there are negotiations which will no doubt take place within the next number of weeks—there have been a number already between the municipalities, for example, but specifically between the municipalities and the government—this is obviously something that will have to be taken into account.

You say there are many who already have. There are also many who haven't. Therefore, there has to be a very tough assessment as to what the practices have been in different places, but the negotiations will have to take that into account. I think that's a very fair-minded and realistic approach.

Mr Mahoney: I guess, Premier, you don't understand the question.

If you've got a number of municipalities, hospitals, universities, colleges around the province that, in determining the level of their tax increases and their service levels, have already negotiated pay freezes, have already negotiated unpaid leave, have already sent out their tax bills, have already announced to their constituents what the tax rate will be, and you come along and set a global figure, a blind global figure for a cut, what are you going to say to the municipalities that indeed have come in responsibly: "You don't have to make the cuts outlined in Bill 48. You don't have to deal with the unpaid leave because you've already done it"? Therefore, the municipalities that haven't done it are going to be hit even harder than what they already anticipate.

You've come out and made a statement that you're going to do something for Hamilton—we don't know what it is—because it's already acted responsibly. North York has already acted responsibly. Mississauga already told the people they'd get a 1% tax decrease. They've already negotiated with their people.

Premier, you're causing all kinds of confusion and uncertainty. People are frightened. They don't know what to do about the cuts that you're proposing in Bill 48.

Will you come clean? Tell the municipalities what you mean when you say you will take into account the cuts that they have already implemented. Are they going to be exempt because they've already done it, and the other municipalities will pay twice? What exactly do you mean, sir, when you say it will be taken into account?

Hon Mr Rae: The answer is, very directly, as I've

already said in answer to previous questions when they have been made, that your leader is the one who's used the word "exemption." I've made it very clear there will not be any blanket exemptions. I've made that very clear.

What we've said is that during the course of the negotiations, for those municipalities and those areas that have already reached agreements which clearly fall within the framework of the social contract discussions and which clearly fall within the same approach with respect to real efforts at wage restraint and to days off and so on, obviously those factors will be taken into account in the course of the negotiations. I don't know what more I can say to indicate that this government has a clear approach. With those who have already taken that approach, obviously that will be taken into account.

Mr Mahoney: I can just picture sitting around the table at a council where you've already put your budget to bed and you've made the cuts. Let's take an example that comes in line with Bill 48 that your Treasurer introduced. The municipality says, "We've already made the cuts, so therefore I guess we don't have to make any more." You've got over 800 municipalities just in the municipal sector alone. Premier, if 100 of them have already met your targets, how are you going to get the \$2 billion out of the remaining 700? That means they're going to have to cut deeper. That means that the municipalities that have not to date come in line with the rules and regulations set out in Bill 48 are going to have to cut deeper.

Your quote, sir, yesterday: "I can understand the frustration of people saying, 'Look, we already gave.' I think that's something that any negotiation has to take into account."

Premier, don't you get it? These people have done their work. Many of the municipalities have been on a debt elimination program for the last 15 years. Many of these municipalities are indeed debt-free today and they are able to balance their budgets. Now they sit in fear that this Premier is going to penalize them, even though they have acted responsibly, even though they have met the guidelines outlined by your Treasurer—

The Speaker: And your question?

Mr Mahoney: —you're going to take more, you're going to cut deeper and you're going to penalize the people who have budgeted properly in this province of Ontario.

Premier, very simple: How do negotiations under Bill 48 allow transfer agencies that have already implemented wage freezes and unpaid leave to implement the further cuts that you are forcing them to make? Will you give us a straight answer?

Hon Mr Rae: I think that if anything is clear, it's that this government has dealt directly with these issues

in a way that other governments have found it difficult to do. I think that's very clear.

These issues will be discussed at the table with the municipalities, and I must say that when I discuss these issues with municipal leaders, as I've done, I find that their attitude is completely different from the kind of overblown, hot-air rhetoric we're hearing from the member for Mississauga West.

Mr Mahoney: They're scared to death of you.

Hon Mr Rae: No. The member opposite says that people are afraid to say what's on their mind. That hasn't, generally speaking, been my experience in dealing with municipal leaders. They tend to be very direct in dealing with us, certainly in dealing with me, and I'm equally direct in response. Whenever I'm asked the question which the member has put forward, I say very directly that that is something that can be taken into account at the table but there will not be and there cannot be any blanket exemptions, and I'm not about to declare that today.

TAX INCREASES

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Premier. I have here just a quarter of the 55,000 ballots that came in today. They were—

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): Did Linda give them to you?

Mr Harris: The Treasurer asks, did Linda give them to me? I now hear today that the Liberals are the "free beer" party, and we know that the NDP will give us free fridges to put them in. What more could Ontarians ask for?

At noon today hundreds of angry taxpayers were here to tell you and the Treasurer and your party what they thought of your \$2-billion tax grab. Over 55,000 have written to the Toronto Sun to tell you that they cannot afford high-taxing government. Equally important is this message: Even those who could in the short term afford higher taxes are telling you that if they can keep the \$2 billion—the families, the individuals, the companies—they can, with that money, create many more jobs than you can.

If you agree with me that job creation in this province is the number one priority, if you agree with that, why will you not let families, consumers, businesses, the private sector, keep their \$2 billion so they can create the jobs we need in this province?

1420

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): If I may say so, I think there was a government that took the kind of position that the leader of the third party, in his now coalition with a well-known Toronto newspaper, is putting forward. That was the position that was taken in the United States in the 1980s.

We are now looking at having to pay for the deficits that were caused by that kind of approach. If you look

at the inherited \$4-trillion deficit problem which the United States is wrestling with, together with the situation we face following the example of the federal government in Ottawa, which I assume the member, as he was such an active member of the convention this weekend, was a very strong supporter of, I think we've seen that.

The hard reality is that as we see it, and we call them as we see them, we don't see a way of dealing with the extent of the deficit problem in this province, or indeed nationally, without addressing the revenue side and without addressing the issue of taxes. You may disagree with that, and the easy medicine, the soft medicine, the way you say it—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —is: "No problem. Just do it all with attrition and that will solve your entire problem. No need to do anything else." I don't think that has quite the credibility that's necessary to deal with the extent of the tough problem we face.

Mr Harris: I will form coalitions with any and all who are concerned that this, one of the most highly taxed jurisdictions in the whole world, is uncompetitive because of the last eight years of overtaxing and over-spending. Any who will join that fight are on my team, and I'll join their team.

This Ontario government, not just you, has reached into the pockets of working men and women in this province too many times. Our problem is not the same as the United States. We've got a spending problem of a magnitude unparalleled almost in any country in the world, a spending problem, and we cannot continue to feed that appetite by hiking taxes.

You're right: There are no easy solutions. I've never said there were. But we can cut back on the massive increase in spending, the likes of which we've never seen, for the last eight years under liberal socialism in this province of Ontario.

These taxpayers are telling you that they will help you, will work with you, and I am telling you that I will work with you to cut \$2 billion of your own spending instead of hiking it as you did in your budget and instead of hiking taxes. Will you listen to them now? Will you listen to the people who are asking you to cut your spending, not hike taxes?

Hon Mr Rae: It's interesting when you talk about taxes, because the Treasurer has just shared a very interesting chart with me. When you talk about people who are making less than \$30,000, which is a very, very substantial number of people in the province, and you look at the taxes that we charge on those people, our taxes come in at 27.4, marginal rate. I know these aren't necessarily the people you were addressing on the front lawn: the people making less than \$30,000. I think the

audience was a slightly different audience out there. Nevertheless, New Brunswick, 28.1; Manitoba, 28.4; Saskatchewan, 29.1; Newfoundland, 29.2; Quebec, combined rate, 37.7. We're at 27.4.

So when you go around badmouthing the province the way you've been badmouthing this province, when you badmouth the competitiveness of this province, you explain that to the workers in Oshawa who competed against two of the top plants in the United States and beat the competition, because this is the best place to do business: We have the lower payroll taxes, we have a better health care system, we have a fairer attitude in relations between employers and employees, we have better productivity, we have a better attitude to training and we have competitive tax rates. And when it comes to people making less than \$30,000, there are only two provinces that do better than us and there are seven provinces that are higher than we are.

So we're doing very well, and I think the honourable member ought to stand up and shout and be proud of this province rather than continually standing in his place and running it down as a place to do business. It's a good place to do business, and you know it.

Mr Harris: I'm always proud of this province. It's its Premier, its government that I badmouth every day, that the poverty groups out on the front lawn are badmouthing. They don't think your budget is fair, taxpayers don't think your budget is fair, public servants don't think your government is fair. You brought in a budget that taxed everyone over \$20,000 a year; you gave them tax hikes.

Premier, let me read you excerpts from a letter from Brian Malcolm.

"Dear Mr Harris:

"Unable to attend the tax protest on June 17 because I'm trying to earn a living to pay the bloody taxes. I am with you. Please convey my message to the government of the day, who only received 38% of the popular vote, that they had no mandate to hike taxes.

"I hit the wall on taxes some time ago. I'm just a working stiff, one of the ones the NDP is supposed to protect, and they're stripping this province of its future. I fear my children will have to seek employment elsewhere.

"To keep my message short: Stop spending. Resign."

That's what they're saying. That's what they're saying about you.

Premier, I would ask you this: Given this, you obviously must realize that the people of Ontario don't trust you to spend their money wisely, that you have a very poor record, as does the government before you, as does the government before them, in taking people's money and spending it wisely.

Why, can you tell me, do you so distrust families and people in this province to spend their own money their

own way? Why do you distrust them so much that you want to go into their pockets and take another \$2 billion out?

Hon Mr Rae: Provincial taxes, as a percentage of GDP, are lower this year than they were two years ago when we took office. That's a fact which the honourable member can't deal with. In each one of your questions, you've talked about how, "You should stop spending." That's exactly, in many, many ministries and in countless examples, what we did.

You're the ones who set up the foreign offices; you had offices in all those countries. We're the ones who shut them down; we've closed them down. We've taken steps that your government had an opportunity to do time and time again and you never did them. We're doing them, but we're also determined to maintain the social fabric, to maintain good housing programs, which you want to do away with, to maintain a public responsibility for child care, which you want to do away with. I don't want to slash and burn housing programs and child care programs. We want to maintain those.

We have competitive, fair tax rates for people in the province; you compare us with everywhere else.

I come back to the central point. You consistently misrepresent, in a most unfair way, what is going on in Ontario in a way, I can only say to the honourable member, that it's not simply that you're attacking the government, you consistently run down the province of Ontario, and that's something I can say, as Premier, I will never, never do.

Mr Harris: Maybe I'll get better answers next week from the new leader coming out of Gananoque, I don't know. But I'll try anyway: It might be my last opportunity, so I'm going to go to the current Premier.

Interjection.

Mr Harris: Are you running? Is that what you're telling us? Are you starting to campaign today? "Gordy for Premier."

My question is to the Premier. Earlier this week, you were quoted as saying you would not meet with the new Prime Minister designate on economic issues because she had not yet won a mandate from the people.

Well, the electors who voted for you did not give you a mandate to hike taxes, to date, by over \$4 billion. They did not give you a mandate—\$1 billion increase in the first budget, \$1 billion in the second, \$2 billion in this—to hike taxes over the already record tax hikes that the Liberals had given us. They didn't give you a mandate to double the provincial debt. They didn't give you a mandate, after the Liberals left us with the biggest deficit in the history of the province for any one year, to triple that deficit, and yet this is what you have done in your first two years in office.

Nothing you've done resembles the Agenda for—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the leader take his seat, please. I can't hear what he's saying.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Could the leader complete his question, please.

1430

Mr Harris: Given that your agenda that you campaigned on is totally different from the agenda that you brought in and it's changed so much and you've changed your mind, wouldn't you agree with me that the voters of Ontario should be given a second opportunity to vote on this budget?

Hon Mr Rae: The answer to that question is no.

Mr Harris: Later today I will be introducing legislation that will allow voters to petition for a referendum on a provincial budget.

When you came into office, here's what you said in your first throne speech—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Harris: Look at that. It would be terrible if we had democracy and the voters had a say.

November 1990 in your throne speech, here's what you said, that you would be a government that will listen to the people and respond to their needs to the best of its ability. Will you live up to your commitment? Will you listen to the people? Will you support my referendum legislation that I'm bringing in today?

Hon Mr Rae: I've had some experience with referendums. I would say to the honourable member, first of all—I'm interested that somebody who believes in such strong, stringent control of the budget—the referendum we had on the Constitution cost tens and tens of millions of dollars.

The second point I'd make is, look at the Tory approach to their ballot on the question. Look at the question that they put. The question would be, do you want to have it all and not have to pay for it and vote for Mike Harris, the Mike-Harris-have-it-all-and-don't-have-to-pay-now, don't-pay-later plan, or do you support the vicious, mean policies of the Rob Rae NDP government which will come in and grab all kinds of money out of your pocket? Which would you pick?

Hon Mr Laughren: Some referendum.

Hon Mr Rae: That's some referendum. The ballots that are piled up there in your laundry bags give some clear indication as to the real credibility behind the question.

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): Sounds pretty fair to me.

Hon Mr Rae: Sounds pretty fair. The member from Stormont-Dundas-Glengarry says it sounds good to him. That's my point: You've got to deal with this situation in a realistic way. Governments have to bring in tough

budgets and that's the way it is. I didn't see you standing up and demanding a referendum on the GST. I didn't see you standing up and demanding a referendum on Mulroney. I haven't seen you do that.

Mr Harris: You bring something forward you campaigned on and I'll say maybe you have a mandate. Nothing you're bringing forward in this budget is anything like the Agenda for People or what you campaigned on. My caucus has consistently endorsed the idea of referendum legislation. The member from York Mills currently has a bill before the House for the second time. The member for Leeds-Grenville introduced referendum legislation in 1987, six years ago. I introduced a bill in 1991.

Premier, we work for the taxpayers. My referendum legislation will let you set the question. If you want to have a different kind of ballot, we're ready for that kind of ballot too. Let's ask them the big question. If you want to ask them the big question, we're ready for that too. But this legislation lets you all keep your cosy jobs for another two years and it simply allows the people to have an opportunity to say, "Go back to the drawing board and redo that budget." I would ask you, will you support the referendum bill we are presenting today, which simply allows the taxpayers and allows the voters to pass judgement on your budget?

Hon Mr Rae: I can understand how agitated the member is. I've found that he's never really recovered since he was turned down for the lead part in Jurassic Park.

I want to say directly to the honourable member as clearly as I can that the approach he's taking to public policy is not an approach that will withstand—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Etobicoke West.

Hon Mr Rae: —serious scrutiny. This government has taken some tough decisions. We've also done so many things that we talked about during the last election campaign, so many things that we campaigned on that you were opposed to. We will deal with them in the Legislature; we will deal with them under the rules of Parliament; we will deal with them as a parliamentary democracy.

That's the way we're going to deal with it, and we will then go to the people at the conclusion of our term and be elected or defeated by the public. That's the parliamentary way; that's the democratic way.

The kind of cheap and easy way that you're referring to and the kind of facile way you're referring to to deal with public policy, no realistic government in the province or in Canada would adopt that kind of a policy. Nobody would take that seriously for a moment, except in search of a cheap headline.

PUBLIC OPINION POLLS

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Premier. I have dealt with this issue with the Premier on a number of different occasions in the hope that he would mend his ways or at least go back to his original philosophy on this matter.

I asked that our staff in the official opposition file a request under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to find out how much polling the government is doing with the taxpayers' dollars, because I can well remember when the Premier used to denounce previous governments for spending money on polls and of course not sharing it with the opposition.

I ask the Premier this: In view of the fact that the Premier is tearing up the contracts of public service workers, in view of the fact that the Premier is ordering cuts in essential services in the province of Ontario because of the dire economic circumstances facing the province of Ontario, and people generally agree that the Premier has to engage in restraint, how can the Premier possibly justify blowing over \$1 million on polls to tell him what he and his government should think?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Mr Speaker, I'll refer that to the Chairman of Management Board.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): The member opposite is correct; I myself heard him raise this question in the House a number of times. It's interesting when you look at questions like this and look back over your shoulder at what's been spent on polling in the past and the kinds of things that money for polling has been spent on.

As we go through significant downsizing in the public sector, as we go through the reorganization of ministries and as we go through looking for different ways to deliver services, consultation with the public is an extremely important part of that process. I should point out to the member who raises the question that the cheapest consultation we can do with the public is the kind of very polling that he refers to.

Mr Bradley: I find that so difficult to believe from a party that was so sanctimonious on this issue. I happened to agree with them in years gone by when they took that position and I thought that when they were elected they would translate their principles into action, but they haven't.

The question I come back to with the Chair of Management Board is this question: Recognizing the very difficult economic circumstances we face in the province, recognizing that you're asking the public service to take cuts in their salaries and that you want to tamper with their pensions, recognizing that you're asking the people of Ontario to have essential services cut because of the economic circumstances, would the minister and would the Premier, because the Premier can whisper an answer to you, not agree that your credibility in dealing with the public service, in dealing

with the municipalities, in dealing with all of the people who will be experiencing these cuts would be increased considerably if you would quit squandering money on polls to tell you what you think?

1440

Hon Mr Charlton: Again, the member's question is an interesting one, but it's only interesting because of the kinds of polling that the Liberal government used to do in this province, polling that was exclusively focused on gauging political attitudes out there.

This government has done three rounds of polling over the past two and a half years almost entirely focused on customer service attitudes. The customer service attitudes that are being pursued are issues about finding out how to deliver the services that the public wants in a more efficient way, in a way that's acceptable to them, and it's part of the process of dealing—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member for Oriole.

Hon Mr Charlton: —with the very questions the member raises.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Mississauga South.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Oriole, please come to order.

ONTARIO FILM REVIEW BOARD

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): My question is for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. In response to a petition tabled in April of this year, this minister said, "It is the policy of the Ontario Film Review Board not to approve films with sexually explicit scenes that degrade or humiliate women, depict brutal violence with sexual overtones, involve the sexual exploitation of children or depict bestiality or necrophilia."

I have learned that the Ontario Film Review Board has approved sex films depicting necrophilia and incest. As well, many slasher films that show brutal violence against women in a sexually suggestive context have also been approved. Minister, how do you explain the contradiction between your statement and the decisions being made by your Ontario Film Review Board?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): I certainly have no evidence that the film review board has been classifying films of the nature that the member described. I would be interested if she would provide me with that information so I would know what she's talking about.

In regard to the slasher films, she's already raised that issue before in the House, and I explained that most of the slasher films she was talking about pre-date the formation of the film review board. We've had several

conversations about that and I think she understands the issue. But please get me the information and I'll look into it.

Mrs Marland: You seem to forget, you're the minister responsible for the Ontario Film Review Board. I'm not going to do your homework. You should know what's going on in this province today, and if you don't know what's going on in this province today, maybe you'd like to speak to the Mahaffy, the French or the de Villiers families. Then perhaps you might understand why this question is important, instead of sitting down and smiling as though it's humorous.

Tomorrow, the Ontario Film Review Board will meet to discuss changes to the board's guidelines so that adult sex films can show bondage, the insertion of foreign objects and ejaculation on the face. You can imagine how hard it is to stand in this House and say that, but it has to be said for you to understand what it is we're talking about and what it is we're concerned about.

The chair of the Ontario Film Review Board has received letters opposing these changes from such groups as the Canadian Federation of University Women and the Coalition for the Safety of Our Daughters. Also, many, many municipalities have passed resolutions to eliminate triple X videos.

The Ontario Film Review Board's guideline for adult sex films do not reflect community standards, yet the chair of the Ontario Film Review Board said, "I will always err with anti-censorship before I err with fascists." I would suggest that the quote by the chair of the Ontario Film Review Board implies that anyone who disagrees with the board's approval policies is a fascist.

Minister, my final question again to you is, will you ensure that the Ontario Film Review Board's guidelines do reflect community standards and comply with the statements that you have made in response to petitions against violence and degradation of women and slasher films?

Hon Ms Churley: I'm happy to answer the question. I am aware that the policy committee was making some recommendations to the full board, and in fact no such decision has been made. It will be considered at a future board meeting, I believe tomorrow, but this has not been passed, by any means.

As I've said before, the board is made up of a diverse group of people from all over Ontario who represent all kinds of views, and it's up to them to sit down and talk through and come to conclusions about what should be classified and what shouldn't, and that's what they're doing. But I want to assure the member that I, too, am very concerned about the issues around violence against women and have expressed those views to the board and will continue to do so.

ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): My question is to the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation. Madam Minister, in my riding of Wentworth North, I have several library boards, heritage boards, parks boards and others that greatly depend on grants from your ministry. In fact, the very existence of some of these boards depends solely on grants from your ministry.

Members of these boards are, as most Ontarians are, fully aware of the tight financial restraints faced by this government, and this creates a great deal of fear as to how the current financial situation is going to affect them.

Madam Minister, what do I tell the members of the Dundas Public Library board, the Ancaster Historical Society, the Flamborough Heritage Society, the parks boards and the community information centres in Wentworth North?

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I appreciate that there are many groups and communities across this province who are interested in the questions that the member has asked, so I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

The concept of people who are most in need being protected is exactly the fundamental principle our government has applied in its recent round of expenditure controls. On the issue of libraries, I'll start with that first, the members of the government's caucus tremendously recognize the value of libraries in communities, and so for that reason would not hear of any cuts to the per household grants to libraries. I'm happy to say that we have fully protected per household grants to libraries.

Libraries are also entitled to project grants under my ministry. We have, of course, with expenditure targets to meet, had to make some cuts in the project grants, from a total of what used to be \$2.9 million to \$1.9 million this year. I should say, though, that libraries are very much an important part of the provincial information system in this province, and for that reason, my ministry has assured them that we'll be working with them to help them access telecommunications funds that are now available through our government's new telecommunications strategy.

With regard to the impact on libraries of municipal cuts, the members of the House will remember that the Minister of Municipal Affairs has announced that—

The Speaker: Will the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Swarbrick: —the unconditional grants to municipalities will be cut by no more than 3% of a municipality's operating grant. I know in North York, for instance, it's 0.46%. Libraries therefore—

The Speaker: Will the minister please conclude her response.

Hon Ms Swarbrick: —I believe to be quite well protected from any cuts from this government to the municipalities because they are not of the degree that would adversely affect libraries.

The Speaker: Will the minister take her seat. Supplementary.

Mr Abel: I still don't have my complete answer to the question—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for York Centre, please come to order. The member for Wentworth North is entitled to a supplementary. Will the member place his question, please.

Mr Abel: This happens to be a very important issue in my riding.

I still would like to know, Madam Minister, what I would tell the historical societies, parks boards and, most importantly, the community information centres in my riding.

Hon Ms Swarbrick: The heritage boards and historic societies etc are eligible for the project funding under my Ministry of Culture heritage project grants. That fund used to amount to \$7.4 million. As a result of our cuts, we've been able to maintain a \$4.8-million pool for them. The criteria are now being worked out to make sure that again we're able to provide that funding to those community groups that most need it. The issue of job creation and job maintenance, of course, will be an essential part of those criteria.

In terms of parks boards, they'd be most interested, of course, in the recreational grants funding. That has been sustained from \$12.2 million down to \$8.4 million, but again, with those kinds of criteria now being developed to protect those most in need.

The Speaker: Could the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Swarbrick: As the member has asked, community information centres funding of \$1.1 million in base funding which we initiated last year is protected, as are the project grants to them.

That leaves probably one area uncovered, but if I'm out of time, I'll sit down.

1450

ONTARIO FILM REVIEW BOARD

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): My question is for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Concerns continue to be raised in this Legislature as to whether the Ontario Film Review Board is protecting the interests of women and children in this province. Recent actions by your government have only increased our concerns.

It was Wendy Priesnitz, a board member appointed by the NDP government, who recently tried to push through that motion at the OFRB recommending that

the board allow adult sex videos, bondage, the insertion of foreign objects, double penetration and ejaculation on the face. This is absolutely unbelievable, but minister, it is your government which is now attempting to have that same Wendy Priesnitz appointed as vice-chair of the OFRB. Yes, the very person who's at the centre of this storm of controversy.

Minister, will you withdraw your unfortunate recommendation that Ms Priesnitz be appointed vice-chair of the OFRB?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): The board has a number of co-chairs or vice-chairs. The way it works is that there are a number of board members, and it's divided up into three panels with a vice-chair on each one. So there are a number, and it's not restricted to a specific number. The right number is the number that it takes to do the job. There are quite a few vice-chairs.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): You support her? Wake up.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for York Centre.

Hon Ms Churley: I would say to the member that my understanding of the discussion around the policy changes is that there has been no final determination by the full board and that this is just one recommendation of several that are being made by the full board, which the full board will make a decision on.

They certainly are aware of my concerns around violence against women in general and particularly gratuitous violence that really contributes to violence against women. But overall there is a vast variety of opinions on these issues at the board.

Ms Poole: This minister constantly claims that it is an independent board and that she can't intervene. What the minister doesn't say is that her staff spent two hours personally coaching Ms Priesnitz in her office before she was to go for that appointment. That is true and we have the name of your assistant who did the coaching.

What the minister also doesn't say is that the public appointments secretariat in the Office of the Premier lied about the qualifications of Ms Priesnitz and what the status was. In what they provided to the committee, they said that with the expiry of other appointments, a vacancy for the position of vice-chair was available. The board right now has five vice-chairs. That is the most it's ever had in its history and there are no vacancies. The Office of the Premier also said that Wendy Priesnitz has been a member of the Ontario Film Review Board for one year. She spent most of that year in Romania. She hasn't got the experience on the board and she is not qualified to be a vice-chair.

Why don't you admit that this is part of your no censorship at any cost program and why don't you withdraw this terrible appointment?

Hon Ms Churley: The statements that the member, I regret to say, is making are totally ridiculous and not factual information. If I'm to be attacked on these things, I would wish that the members would have factual information. As I said, there are no set members to be vice-chairs. Each panel has to have vice-chairs. There are a number of vacancies coming up.

Ms Poole: He said there was a vacancy. There are no vacancies.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Eglinton.

Hon Ms Churley: Please listen to my answer. It's important that you know the facts.

There are a number of vacancies coming up over the summer. We need some new vice-chairs to sit on those panels. That's the fact of the matter and I'll be happy to get you more information on that.

With regard to my staff meeting with Ms Priesnitz—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Eglinton.

Hon Ms Churley: —it is not unusual for my staff to meet with our appointees for many of the boards and commissions that we appoint people to. Going before a government standing committee can be a very harrowing experience.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): You have no credibility on this. Revoke the appointment. Resign.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Oriole.

Hon Ms Churley: —and it is very common practice to sit down—

Interjections.

Hon Ms Churley: To wrap up, it's very common for us to meet with appointees—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Oriole.

Hon Ms Churley: —who are being appointed to boards and commissions so that we can explain the process to them. It hasn't been restricted to this one woman. My staff has met with many appointees.

HIGHWAY TOLLS

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): My question is to the Minister of Transportation. What will the revenue generated by toll roads, as set out in Bill 17, be used for?

Interjections.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): With the highest of respect to the member opposite, I find it extremely difficult—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Pouliot: —when I'm constantly being

interrupted by another distinguished colleague, the member for Mississauga. Would you kindly repeat the question so I can give you the answer that you so rightly deserve?

The Speaker: The House would come to order first.

Mr Turnbull: I asked what the revenue generated by Bill 17 from toll roads would be used for.

Hon Mr Pouliot: When we talk about the new concept of toll roads, the intent is to dedicate the revenues from toll roads, which we propose be in place by 1996. It will be a dedicated amount and go directly to pay for the cost of the roads and hopefully a fairly substantial portion thereof.

Mr Turnbull: In the February announcement by the minister with respect to this bill, he made certain criteria. He said that "toll systems should be used on new roads only and that tolls intended to accelerate road construction and not finance road maintenance"—I emphasize "not finance road maintenance."

To the minister, I would say I'm just reading from your bill. Under subsection 47(2), it says, "Subject to the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the corporation may make regulations designating any highway as a toll highway."

My question to you is very simple. Is your government incapable of drafting legislation which reflects the criteria that you set out, or is there a hidden agenda?

Hon Mr Pouliot: It's obvious that my friend opposite needs help, and I'm here to try to get him back on the road, because obviously there are a great deal of difficulties once you hit the soft shoulders.

The purpose of tolls is to offer people a choice, offer an alternative, help alleviate the traffic, the congestion of the 401, which is incidentally, as you well know and you can appreciate, 350,000 vehicles per day, the second busiest in North America. It's being oversubscribed, overcapacitated, so we're building the 407.

In order to involve the free enterprise system, in order to do it faster—because at the rate of construction that we have set forth, Highway 407 would see its completion in 2035. Well, we can't wait that long. We can't wait to be in our 25th term of office, so what we're doing is getting everyone involved and we're accelerating construction, and tolls will allow us to do this.

1500

MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Planning and development issues seem to mobilize public opinion more than any other issues in my riding and I guess in most other ridings throughout Ontario. I'm constantly asked for help by constituents who are frustrated with the current planning process. Concerns about development in my riding vary widely, but there's a common theme running through them all. Citizens feel strongly

there is not enough public consultation and involvement in the making of decisions that affect their lives. They demand much stronger protection and enhancement of the quality and the integrity of the air, water and land resources. Will the minister explain to the House how he intends to deal with this report from the Sewell commission?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): The commission released its draft report in December. Since then it has had some 17 public forums across the province. The public consultation process was unprecedented in terms of its scale and the number of people it was able to hear. The final report I expect will be released very soon and will contain in fact a number of changes based on the input that the commissioners have had. As a matter of fact, the commission has scheduled a press conference for Monday, June 21, to release the final report. When we receive that report, my staff and I will be reviewing it. We will be making recommendations to our cabinet, including recommendations for further consultation as needed. I can tell you that the existing policies will not be changed until we've had that consultation.

Mr Duignan: The commission has been developing a set of goals and policies that are intended to give a clear direction to governments and their staff for carrying out the responsibilities under the Planning Act. These goals and policies have so far included protection of the environment and cultural heritage, recognition of social needs, promotion of intensification, protection of agricultural areas, pursuit of energy and water conservation. Can the minister assure us that there will be an attempt to ensure that the principles of the Sewell report will be taken into account when the Minister of Municipal Affairs begins his revision of the Planning Act?

Hon Mr Philip: Yes, I can assure the member that will happen.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): We can hardly see your straight face.

Hon Mr Philip: I'm sure that Mr Offer, who has somebody acting as his ventriloquist right now, is pleased with that.

The commission's final report set out its proposals for a new planning system and a comprehensive set of provincial policies. After the commission submits its final report, the cabinet will review the recommendations and decide on the implementation of the report. The principles recommended in the commission's report will be a major consideration in any revisions to the Planning Act which we will be making.

Recent land use planning initiatives of the government included the work of the provincial facilitator's office. We're moving in the direction of implementing the commission's report, the cabinet-approved growth and settlement policy guidelines released last Septem-

ber, and the proposed revisions to the Planning Act that were introduced two weeks ago as part of the bill which I introduced.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Philip: All of this is part of a comprehensive package to be sensitive to the public and to speed up the process.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: I refer to section 21(a) of the standing orders, which refers to points of privilege. It is extremely important to me, for my credibility in this Legislature, that ministers not make false statements about what I have provided as information. I have here a document which was sent out by the Ontario Film Review Board this very week, which does not even list Wendy Priesnitz as a member. That's how much experience this particular member has, that they don't even have her on their list. I would like an apology from the minister.

The Speaker: The member will know that she does not have a point of privilege. Members may rise to correct their own record, but not someone else's.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): No, she is saying she misled the House.

The Speaker: The member knows that he cannot use unparliamentary language.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): What is parliamentary language?

The Speaker: You may not accuse another member of misleading the House. Not the member for Eglinton; the member for Brampton South, who is not in his rightful place.

Mr Callahan: I will go back to my rightful place.

The Speaker: Yes, and then withdraw the remark. Thank you.

Motions. I'm sorry, did the minister wish to respond?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): Ms Priesnitz has been a board member for well over a year. I just want to clarify that to the member.

The Speaker: That is a matter of discussion and quite properly belongs during oral questions.

PETITIONS

PUBLIC SERVICES

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Northumberland, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We, the undersigned, call on the Ontario government to maintain and improve our public services. Public services are vital to our communities and our way of life. We can't afford to lose them."

I have signed the petition.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES ALLOCATIONS DE RETRAITE DES DÉPUTÉS À L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

On motion by Mr Kormos, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 53, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les allocations de retraite des députés à l'Assemblée législative.

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold): This bill today amends the Legislative Assembly Allowance Act by providing that members retiring on or after January 1, 1993, would not be entitled to be paid their pension until they attained the age of 60. If a member dies on or after the day on which the bill become law and leaves a surviving spouse, the spouse would not be entitled to be paid survivor pension benefits until the day on which the member would have attained the age of 60 had he or she lived. However, if such a member leaves a surviving child or children but no spouse, the children would still be entitled to an immediate survivor benefit.

BUDGET REFERENDUM ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LES RÉFÉRENDUMS PORTANT SUR LES BUDGETS

On motion by Mr Harris, the following bill was introduced for first reading:

Bill 54, An Act requiring Referendums on the Budgetary Policy of the Government of Ontario / Loi exigeant la tenue de référendums sur la politique budgétaire du gouvernement de l'Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? No?

All those in favour of the introduction of the bill will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): This bill will allow some of these petitions to be delivered to the electoral officer if it's passed. It's to provide that after any budget, if 5% of eligible voters petition the election expenses officer to hold a referendum on the budget, and should 50% of the eligible voters vote and 60% of them vote in favour of a review, it requires the government to go back and bring a new budget forward. It's not a confidence vote; just a little say in direct democ-

racy. I encourage the government to allow it to come forward as soon as possible.

1510

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SOCIAL CONTRACT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONTRAT SOCIAL

Mr Laughren moved second reading of Bill 48, An Act to encourage negotiated settlements in the public sector to preserve jobs and services while managing reductions in expenditures and to provide for certain matters related to the Government's expenditure reduction program / Loi visant à favoriser la négociation d'accords dans le secteur public de façon à protéger les emplois et les services tout en réduisant les dépenses et traitant de certaines questions relatives au programme de réduction des dépenses du gouvernement.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the minister have any opening remarks?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Yes indeed, Mr Speaker. I did want to make a few remarks on the introduction of Bill 48, the Social Contract Act, 1993.

This piece of legislation is vitally important to Ontario. It will enable us to protect public service jobs; it will enable us to preserve priority public services that promote a high quality of life; it will encourage public sector employers and employees to work together to find solutions to our fiscal challenges, and it will help us to save \$2 billion a year in savings for each of the next three years. That will help us slow down the growth in Ontario's debt and enable this province to continue investing in jobs and people and services in the years to come.

It means we are dealing with Ontario's problems rather than running and hiding from them the way the Liberals did when they were in office in this province.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: This bill will also help us ensure fairness as we undertake restructuring in the public sector. The legislation sets out certain parameters for the parties to work within. It protects low-income employees. It protects pay equity. It provides income protection and extended redeployment and retraining benefits for any laid-off workers. It encourages successful negotiations by offering a reduced target for those who can reach an agreement that follows the principles outlined above.

The bill also safeguards jobs and services by placing time lines on the parties for negotiations and by providing a plan of action should local or sectoral agreements not be reached by August 1.

Bill 48 honours the process of negotiation by allow-

ing six more weeks of talks. At the same time, it protects our priorities of jobs and services by laying out a plan of action to safeguard these things. The bill also represents a serious effort by the government to ensure that its deficit target is met.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I know the Liberals don't want any solutions to Ontario's problems. They just want to tax and spend, and we're not going to do that.

This piece of legislation is part of the government's three-pronged plan to control the deficit so that we can continue investing in jobs and services. We have already announced \$4 billion in savings through the expenditure control plan. We have already announced how we will raise revenue this year through a combination of tax, non-tax revenues and asset sales that will amount to over \$2 billion.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Remember Alberta? No New Democratic Party.

Hon Mr Laughren: Mr Speaker, are you going to allow the Liberals to permit me to talk or are you going to allow them to heckle all afternoon?

The Acting Speaker: I would say to the honourable member for York Centre that I've said "Order" a number of times. Obviously the Minister of Finance has the floor, and I would ask the honourable member not to interject and to allow him to make his statement.

Mr Sorbara: I would just say, Mr Speaker, if the Minister of Finance wants to deliver his speech in the Parliament, that's fine, but—

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member will not make any statement because it's not his position to make a statement. I would ask the honourable minister to continue his comments.

Hon Mr Laughren: He still hasn't got over the fact that he's no longer in government and never will be again. That's his problem.

Mr Sorbara: Two terms, Floyd. You're going to have one.

Hon Mr Laughren: Mr Speaker, are you going to control the member from York Centre from mouthing off all afternoon?

The Acting Speaker: I would say to the honourable members on all sides of the House that this is obviously a contentious issue. If we could allow those who have the opportunity to speak an opportunity to speak, that's the way it should be done in this House. I'd ask the honourable minister to continue his remarks.

Hon Mr Laughren: I'll try once again, but if the member from York Centre is just going to mouth off, it's going to be very difficult to introduce the second reading of this bill.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West):

Knock it off, Floyd, and give us our information.

Hon Mr Laughren: Well, he's just one big mouth.

This bill to reduce public sector compensation by \$2 billion is the final part of our budget plan and it is a necessary part. I've assigned each of the eight sectors a spending reduction target based on its share of the total public sector wage bill. Effective July 1 this year, we will reduce transfer payments to employers in these sectors according to their targets. The bill gives the parties, government, employers and bargaining agents until August 1 to negotiate compensation measures in order to meet their new targets.

Interjection.

Hon Mr Laughren: Is the member from York Centre going to continue to mouth off all afternoon or is he going to let me continue to speak? I'd ask a ruling from you, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: I would say to the honourable minister that there are always interjections on all sides of the House, it seems to me. I would say to the honourable minister—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: I would ask the honourable member just to be seated for a moment. There's no question that there should be respect for all members who have the floor in this House. Obviously, the honourable Minister of Finance has the floor. I would ask him to take the floor and I would ask other members not to interject.

Hon Mr Laughren: Each agreement, whether sectoral or local, must live up to the principles outlined in Bill 48; that is, fair and equal treatment of employees, exemption for those earning less than \$30,000, and enhanced redeployment and retraining opportunities for laid-off workers. Within this framework, the parties have the flexibility to use creative ways to find their reduction targets.

The incentive for employees to negotiate an agreement before August 1 is access to the job security fund. The incentive for employers to negotiate an agreement is a reduced savings target of 20%. This incentive will be offset, if necessary, by lower unfunded liability payments to the public sector pension funds. Pension benefits will not be decreased. By reaching the agreement before the deadline, both parties can avoid the fail-safe provision.

This provision, which comes into effect August 1 if the parties don't manage to reach an agreement, guarantees the government its \$2 billion while minimizing the impact of the reductions on public sector jobs and services.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Order. I'm going to say to the honourable member for York Centre right now that his

continual interjections, regardless of my requests for him to comply, are totally unacceptable. I would ask the honourable member to please refrain from that, and if the honourable member doesn't refrain from that, he's going to have to leave this House for the day. I ask you to please allow the honourable minister to make his statement.

Hon Mr Laughren: The fail-safe allows employers to freeze wage increases until March 31, 1996. If that is not enough to meet their target, then employers can require employees to take up to 12 days a year of unpaid leave.

This government believes that restructuring in the public sector must be based on the principles of fairness, supporting priority services and protecting jobs. At the same time, we recognize that the principle of collective bargaining should be honoured. This bill steers a very difficult course between these principles of respecting bargaining on one hand and securing jobs and services and fairness on the other hand. That's why we've allowed another six weeks for employers and employees to work out ways to reach their targets. This is in addition to the eight weeks we gave them during the first round of talks. These moves respect bargaining, but in the end we must secure the principles of jobs, services and fairness. That's why we introduced the fail-safe for August 1. It is the only way we know of to save the \$2 billion while still protecting public sector jobs and services.

We are the first government in Canada to attempt such a far-reaching social contract. Despite some setbacks, we continue to believe this is a worthwhile process. We also believe that the proposals we made at the original set of negotiations were fair and progressive. That is why we have maintained many of the principles of the social contract in this bill, Bill 48. I remain quite hopeful that numerous agreements on a sectoral and local level can be successfully concluded.

In conclusion, I would just say that this government is attempting to deal with this expenditure problem, unlike the predecessor government, the Liberals, who spent in a totally out-of-control fashion during the 1980s, which got us into the mess we're in now. We are dealing with the problem, and we're going to put this province on a sound financial footing regardless of the fact that the official opposition has no alternative, nothing but complaints, and denies its role in the problems that we have to deal with today.

1520

Mr Sorbara: It just blows the mind to imagine that this Minister of Finance, who a few short years ago in this Legislature was one of the great defenders of civil rights and the rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively, could be sponsoring a bill which basically suspends and poisons collective bargaining in the public sector for purposes that amount to a \$2-billion saving in

one year.

Is that the price for him of collective bargaining? Is that the price for him of the civil rights that people have fought and worked for over a course of 50 years?

His bill will not survive. Even if it is forced through this Legislature, the people of this province, when they actually analyse it and see that instead of simply dealing with the wage issue, the Minister of Finance has suspended collective bargaining in Ontario, the Minister of Finance has curtailed or removed the typical right of a worker to participate through a trade union in issues relating to his workplace—all of that is gone by the Minister of Finance, who replaces collective bargaining with arbitrary powers placed in his hands, where he can make decisions on behalf of 900,000 workers as to what he thinks is right or wrong in Ontario. The truth is that over the past three years it's not the workers who have been wrong but the Minister of Finance who has been wrong.

He says that this is all due to overspending by the Liberals during 1985 to 1990. I remember Floyd Laughren, then a simple member of the opposition, referring to every single sector in this province as being underfunded and demands from Floyd Laughren to spend more money in our colleges, to spend more money in our universities.

I say to the Minister of Finance that this bill shames him. It shames his party. It does not achieve the objectives that he wishes to achieve, and it will be a horrible legacy when his party and this government are finally defeated.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments?

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): This kind of bill guts the heart of what the NDP stands for. I can't understand, as they sit there, that not one of those members would get up—and I hope they will during this bill—to speak against it.

I tell you, people out there are hurting, and they're hurting badly, to realize that 9,000 contracts have already been settled and that this socialist government, which at one time would have come down so heavily on the government of the day from 1985 to 1990 if we had ever tampered with collective bargaining agreements, now is the one getting in there and ripping apart these contracts.

Some of these members were begged and beseeched to run for positions when they couldn't find anyone to run, many of them from OPSEU and all the unions. They ran, and on the back of those unions they got in with that support. They turn around now and go to them to gut their contracts, to lay them off, to tamper with their vacation pay, to tamper with their pensions. The people will not forget after they have done a terrible job.

I know the honourable member so well, who is quite an honourable man, but the task he has today—he was so wrong in his 1990 budget, so wrong in 1991, and when we told him he was going in the wrong direction, he said, "No way." Then he turned around and looked beyond 1990, and started to say, "It's the Liberal spending and mismanagement." They are the ones who mismanaged this budget so badly and now turn on those people who are struggling; not only to tax them heavily at the beginning, not only decide to promise them a whole lot of free tuition fees, but today you're going to take more out of the economy. It's a shame.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It's obvious this government is so ashamed of this legislation that it doesn't even have a quorum in the House.

The Acting Speaker: I would ask the table, is there a quorum in the House?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments?

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I notice that noticeably absent from the Minister of Finance's remarks today was information that could elucidate the government's position with respect not only to changes that it will be making in the pension plans of public servants who are employed by this government but the effect on public service pensions in other sectors.

The government has assumed, and I think our leader made the point very well yesterday, that there will be \$500 million of savings taken out of pensions twice, on two occasions, for two different purposes. Although the government has, we are told, calculated those pension savings at \$500 million, we have seen and have heard from actuaries who say that in fact the Treasurer is placing the public sector pension plans at a far greater degree of risk than should be allowed and the people who will suffer from that are the pension holders. We heard the Treasurer say nothing about this.

There will be catch-up subsequent to the end of this social contract. The Treasurer spoke nothing about that and what kinds of additional pension changes would have to be made on a later occasion.

I am asking the Treasurer today if he will present to us, because he did not discuss this in his remarks, any actuarial studies that have been done. Bring them to the table and let's have the whole thing in the open so people know what will happen to them when it comes time for them to retire and to make changes in their own plans about their permanent and long-term life.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? Seeing none, the honourable member for Nickel Belt, you have two minutes to respond.

Hon Mr Laughren: I will be very brief. The member for York Centre should give no one a lecture on workers' rights, given what he did to workers when he was the Minister of Labour. However, putting that behind us—

Mr Mahoney: He isn't even here.

Hon Mr Laughren: I know he's not here. He yelled and shouted and then ran out of the chamber. I think we don't need any lectures from the member for York Centre on protecting workers' rights, given his record both in dealing with workers' compensation issues and health and safety issues.

I would say to the members of the assembly that it's true that respect for collective bargaining is something which most of us hold very dear. I can tell you that for me personally it was a very difficult choice whether or not to simply reduce transfers to our agencies out there by \$2 billion, thereby not only causing 20,000 or 30,000 layoffs in the public sector, but jeopardizing, to a tremendous degree, services to the most vulnerable people out there. I can tell you that for me I came down on the side of protecting vulnerable people all across this province, because I don't believe that removing services at the community level is the appropriate thing to do when there's a 5% solution in public sector compensation. I believe what we've done is to steer a very difficult course between respecting the collective bargaining rights of employees and protecting services for vulnerable people all across this province.

That's not an easy choice to make, but I don't believe for a minute that the answer is what the Liberals are implying: to not reduce expenditures. I honestly don't know what they want any more. They say they want a lower deficit, but they don't want it to come out of public sector compensation, they're opposed to any kind of reduction in expenditures, they don't like the tax increases and they don't want a higher deficit.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member's time has expired.

Hon Mr Laughren: I want to tell you, it is completely beyond me how they expect to have any credibility in this province whatsoever.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Mahoney: I don't know if I can say I'm delighted to rise to speak on this issue, because I'd really rather we weren't in the shape that we're in, that this Treasurer has put us in. The only answers we ever get to any of our questions that are raised or to any of our speeches or any of our comments or reactions is that they don't know what the Liberals want. I'll tell you something. We know what we want: We want you guys to come clean. We want you to tell the people of the province of Ontario what you're really doing to them.

I see some of the young people have left. I'm disappointed because I wanted to use an analogy that I see

happening, although there are still a few folks here watching this. I see an analogy. We all know—

1530

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): They did nothing for five years.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, he doesn't bother me. Don't worry about it. I'm not quite as sensitive about this as the Treasurer. I can handle the heckling, but I appreciate your attempts to keep them under control.

I thought about a very recent event that's taking place and it's got to do with the new movie Jurassic Park. The Premier made reference to it earlier today in an answer, pointing to the leader of the third party in some kind of reference to his playing the lead role in that particular film. I'm assuming he was thinking of him as being a dinosaur.

I think Steven Spielberg missed the mark. I don't know how many of the young folks here have seen this wonderful movie. I've seen a lot of the clips and everything and it looks quite dramatic. He shouldn't have called it Jurassic Park, he should have called it Queen's Park.

I mean, it's quite clear to me. If you just follow me with the script, we have the Harrisaurus and the Tordactaurus. Here they are with all their simple-minded solutions of simply wiping out taxation, reducing the deficit, increasing services, all the simple-minded solutions of the Tordactaurus and Mr Harrisaurus; led by, on the government side—follow me with this script—the Laughren brontosaurus. The Laughren brontosaurus is a plant eater.

The thing that doesn't quite make it is that the brontosaurus in the movie has a long neck and he's able to eat the foliage from the tops of trees. So we'll have to stretch our imagination a little bit and say that this man, the Treasurer, the Minister of Finance, the brontosaurus of Ontario, a plant-eater stripping trees bare, this Treasurer is stripping the taxpayers bare with his increased taxes and with the regulatory burden.

I want to get to some of the regulatory items because we seem to focus on things like tax increases. It's the hidden damage this government does that is so frightening to the business community and, frankly, to the working people, men and women, of this province.

Then we go to the most unusual dinosaur of all in the movie Queen's Park. We go to the Bob Mackenzie stegosaurus. It had heavy armour covering his entire body, including a large plate like an arc around the head and shoulders. The purpose of this for the Bob Mackenzie stegosaurus is to give it complete protection from the outside.

Yesterday, Mr Speaker, you'll recall I asked a question of Mr Mackenzie—"Do you support Bill 48?"—a man who until he became Labour minister

would have stood probably in this seat or that seat and said that he was the champion of collective bargaining, that he was the one who was going to protect all of the workers in this province. Yet he stood up, I give him credit, and he openly admitted he's changed his stripes. He's totally on the other side. Hard to imagine Bob Mackenzie as a Tory, but clearly he has said he is supporting this draconian legislation which will be stripping workers of their rights for collective bargaining and their opportunities for freedom in the collective bargaining process. But he makes a great character in this cast for the movie Queen's Park.

The Tyrannosaurus rex: In the movie, an interesting character, the largest of the meat-eaters, the most vicious and feared, attacking and eating even its own species. We have for the purposes—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): There he is, Bob Mackenzie.

Mr Mahoney: No, it's not Bob Mackenzie. For the purposes of the movie Queen's Park, we've renamed it to the Tyrannosaurus rae. It's quite clear to me Mr Rae would eat his own species, in throwing them out of cabinet, in leaving them out on a limb wherever they want.

That of course leads us to the pterodactyls, who were able to fly to safety. You, sir, among all in this House know what a pterodactyl will do. He will simply fly across the floor to a lofty perch, high up in the corner of this place. So you have a place in the wonderful movie Queen's Park as one of the pterodactyls, along with Mr Kormos, Mr Morrow and former cabinet minister Haslam, and we don't know how many others.

That's one of the things that's so fascinating around here. There are people sitting over there, I would say right over there, strong supporters of the labour movement, strong supporters. I believe the member for—would it be Downsview? The member for Fort York—strong labour types, no question; solidarity for ever. Well, they are pterodactyls potentialis, I would suggest. They may at any time fly across this chamber to a perch high up here and be stars in the movie, Queen's Park. Steven Spielberg awaits.

But the most fascinating thing of all in the comparison of the movie Jurassic Park and the yet-to-be-released movie, Queen's Park, is how did we come to the destruction of the dinosaurs. Scientists will tell you that there was a large meteorite that flew around the earth and slammed into the earth some millennium ago and coughed up a covering around the planet that blocked out the sun, and the dinosaurs were extinct.

I thought about this this morning and I thought, "This social contract is exactly like a meteorite. It is flying around the province of Ontario and I think the good news is that when it slams into the province of Ontario and creates the damage, then these dinosaurs, Harris-

aurus and the Torydectaurus, will be gone. They will be gone and the Premier and his group all will be gone and we will finally be rid of the dinosaurs in the movie, Queen's Park, and the humans will climb out of the ashes—

Mr Stockwell: It's not even funny, Mahoney. Stop.

Mr Mahoney: I'm not trying to be funny; I'm trying to be accurate. They will climb out of the ashes and they will realize the serious mistake they've caused.

I'm particularly interested—

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I regret to interrupt the speech, Mr Speaker, but I have to draw to your attention that I don't believe there's a quorum present.

The Acting Speaker: I'd ask the table to ascertain if there's a quorum.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member from Mississauga West has the floor.

Mr Mahoney: It's interesting how members of the Conservative Party get upset when they don't like someone saying something about, perhaps, their behaviour on this issue or their position. We're not sure what their position is yet. I'm going to dwell in my 90 minutes much more directly on the government, but I think it is very important to point out that there have been several flip-flops, that we're really not quite sure where the Tory Party is standing.

They like to stand up and shout about supporting restraint, but let me just tell you, Mr Speaker, that Mr Mike Harris and the Ontario Tories just can't seem to make up their minds where they are, and in two short months he and the party have both supported and opposed the social contract process. They said the \$2 billion in cuts wasn't enough—in fact, I read quotes in this place saying they should cut deeper—and then accuse the NDP of going too far on the \$2 billion.

They've bashed the unions and then criticized the government for union bashing. They want it both ways. Again, they've demanded legislation to enforce the social contract and then announce legislation isn't necessary. It's confusing, I'm sure, to those folks who would like to perhaps support them. They say, "We don't understand what's going on." They propose simplistic alternatives and then change the numbers they use to support their proposals less than a week later. Now they sound like they don't like the social contract, but they can't tell us how they'll vote on it, and who knows what tomorrow will bring.

There's more on the inconsistencies, but I'd rather get

to Bill 48—

Mr Stockwell: Just wait an hour, you'll know where we stand.

Mr Mahoney: Well, I probably don't have as much trouble understanding where you stand. If you could get the rest of your caucus to come along, then you might have a position. You're up? Okay, that's good; you might have a position. Maybe you can tell me if your leader, Mr Harris, has given you the freedom to actually express a caucus viewpoint. That will be fascinating to hear. If the caucus position supports today the rather right-wing extreme views of the member for Etobicoke centre, then perhaps tomorrow it will support the rather left-wing views of some of the pink Tories who are over on that particular side, if there are any left, but we'll find that out.

1540

The Treasurer talked about dealing with Ontario's problems and one of the things—and I believe he believes this. I don't think he's insincere in believing it. I just happen to think he's seriously flawed in his thinking and that he's wrong. He says that the purpose of this bill is to safeguard—I think this is almost a quote—jobs and services. Then at the same time as they do that, they turn around and announce—what do they call it?—a job protection fund.

What it really is, it's an unemployment fund. They're topping up unemployment insurance benefits. Help me on this. If you're creating a fund—

Interjection.

Mr Mahoney: How can you have wage protection, I say to the member opposite, when you're freezing wages? Is that wage protection? "Okay. We'll protect you at this rate for the next three years." Don't play games with words. Call it what it is.

We supported a three-year freeze, no problem with that. But you're not going to solve the problem and find the \$2 billion that you need, that this Treasurer needs to meet his stated goals by simply freezing wages. You know that. Your partners have told you that. The municipalities, the universities, the colleges, the school boards, they've told you that.

The conservation authorities were here earlier today. The conservation authorities have put forward a proposal where they can find \$100 million in savings for this government and they have said, "Look, don't take away our tax credit." Mr Speaker, you know how that works. When the conservation authority buys land or acquires it through some sort of legacy from a citizen, there are taxes due on that land. They are not exempt. No one is exempt. They have to pay taxes.

Where do they get the money for that? They get it in the form of a tax grant from the provincial government. Why? Because the provincial government, on behalf of the people of Ontario, is interested in supporting the

conservation authorities to protect all of the land, the Niagara Escarpment land, the Credit Valley land, the land in the Etobicoke Valley system, the Don Valley system, the Rouge park, whatever it is. They want to protect all of this land for the future of our young people. So they give them a grant to pay for the taxes.

What this government is saying to the conservation authorities is, "We're going to cut that grant out." If they cut that grant out, then the next question is, "Are you going to exempt us from having to pay taxes?" and the answer is no. So they then say, "Well, tell us how we're going to pay our taxes." There's only one answer for these people. What can they do? Can they put revenue-generating facilities in all the conservation authority lands? Are they going to build—even though they have no money—swimming pools all over the province of Ontario? You know, it's like Field of Dreams: Build it and hope they will come.

They have no way of generating the revenue except one solution: sell the land. If they sell the land, who would buy it unless they can do something with it, such as put some construction on it, build a house, build a building, do something with the land?

The conservation authorities are under seige. They've said to this government, "We'll give you \$100 million," and this government has said: "We're not interested. Meet our targets. We're cutting out your grants. We're cutting out your tax grants. We don't care what your problems are." That's what I'm hearing. That's what they're hearing. That's why they're down here supporting the private member's bill that was on the floor here today, which I'm pleased to say I supported. That's why they're upset. They're not saying, "We can't help." They're saying: "We recognize that we are part of the problem. We recognize that we've got to get our act together as an association, provincially, of conservation authorities."

Maybe there need to be some mergers of particular functions. Maybe there needs to be some rationalization of services. Maybe we don't need to have the Ministry of Natural Resources advising council on an issue in one of their areas at the same time as the conservation authority is giving advice contrary to the Ministry of Natural Resources.

I take you back to the Creditview bog, an infamous problem in Mississauga in which the city council approved, after having gone through the entire process, a draft plan of subdivision on the land that was encompassed by the Creditview bog, only to find out that the conservation authority had one recommendation and the Ministry of Natural Resources another. The thing wound up in a bog, frankly; it wound up in a mess. It wound up costing the taxpayers money. It wound up costing the, in this case, very innocent land owners, a number of them. They weren't huge, big developers, but even if they were, what does it matter?

It wound up costing the people who owned the land, who wanted to build the houses, who wanted to create the jobs, who wanted to create economic development, who wanted to create growth, who wanted to do something positive, who wanted to pay taxes through all of this. You know that when you build, you create value added products, be they homes or whatever. When you do that, you sell them and people fill them up with furniture and with refrigerators and with carpeting, and with all of the good things that make up a community on the outside: you build community centres, and it goes on and on and on.

That's how you get the economy of this province going again. This economy in Ontario, especially in the GTA, is a bricks and mortar economy. If we could get the construction industry going again, we'd have work for the construction workers in the province, for goodness' sake. We'd have opportunities for people to experience growth.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): When you had the bill, you planned ahead. Ask yourself a question: What's going to happen?

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Mahoney: I don't know what's bugging him, Mr Speaker. Did you just sit on something, or what seems to be the trouble?

Mr Perruzza: You don't know what you're talking about.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Mahoney: If the example of the conservation authority—I even see a few nods over there. I think people understand how serious a problem the conservation authority issue is.

Interjection.

Mr Mahoney: You wouldn't understand what I'm talking about. Maybe you don't have any conservation authorities in your riding. Maybe you don't even understand how important conservation land is in this province. Let me tell you—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Order. I've asked the honourable member for Downsview to please end his interjections. The honourable member for Mississauga West has the floor. It is his turn to speak. You will have an opportunity to be part of this debate, and I would ask the honourable member to allow the member for Mississauga West to speak. The honourable member has the floor.

Mr Mahoney: Thanks very much; I can use a little help. Gary, good to see you, the member for Oakville South.

The point I was attempting to make is that when you make decisions to cut something, there's an impact, and what this government has not done is looked at what the

impact is. We know there has to be restraint. Why not listen to the conservation authorities? Why not listen to the association of authorities from around the province who have offered this government right on a platter \$100 million in savings? They've said, "We know we're part of the problem." Vicki Barron at the Credit Valley Conservation Authority said to me: "Steve, we know we're part of the problem. We want to be part of the solution."

Well, forcing them to sell their land at a time when we should be finding ways to conserve more land for our future uses—anybody who believes in the environment, anybody who believes in the ecology, anybody who believes in the opportunities for our young people to enjoy conservation lands, be they on the escarpment or wherever, would understand that we do not want to force our conservation authorities to sell their land. So what are they going to do? How are they going to get the money to pay the taxes?

You can shout all you want, but the reality is that one of the partners—I just used that example and I have some others—in this process is the conservation authorities.

Mr Perruzza: You guys squeezed them for five years. You squeezed when you had all kinds of money.

Mr Mahoney: What's interesting as he starts to spout again is that these people have been in government for over two years now, and any time they're asked a question, all they can do, whether it's from the third party or the official opposition, is harken back to former governments. I don't know when they're going to learn it, but you guys have got the limos, you guys have the government, you have the mantle of power—although I know it rests in the corner office and there's only one person who controls that lever; I know that for a fact. But you have the limos, it's your job to set policy, it's your job to listen to the people of this province.

1550

So we have the Treasurer standing up here. Obviously it's difficult for him; I can appreciate the fact that this is a difficult time for Floyd Laughren. This is the same individual who used to espouse nationalizing Inco. If that's not left-wing socialism—I don't even think that's democratic socialism. This is the same person who used to believe in all that kind of thing.

Mr Perruzza: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: We're talking about the social contract, and it seems to me he's talking about anything but the social contract legislation.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Downsview does not have a point of order. The honourable member for Mississauga West has the floor.

Mr Mahoney: I'm not surprised at that, because they obviously don't get it. They don't realize what I

have been talking about for the last 10 minutes. It's the impact on the conservation authorities as a result of the cuts that come from the social contract. They just don't get it. I am talking about that.

I'll recognize that my description of Floyd is perhaps not germane to the debate at hand, but I use it simply to make a point, that he has gone from those days when he would have supported nationalizing Inco to now saying he doesn't want to do things like that. He's changed his mind. A quantum leap, believe me, a quantum leap, my goodness, to go from the far left of democratic socialism to the far right of what you'd have to call Tory bluisism. Talk about a dinosaur. It's fascinating to see that transition. It's amazing. It's just because all of a sudden he's in power. It isn't what he said when he was over here.

I recognize that the Treasurer has a problem. My leader, Lyn McLeod, has offered on numerous occasions to be part of the process to help solve the problem. We believe there has to be restraint in this government. We told them two years ago not to keep bringing in \$10-billion deficits. But they didn't listen. They thought they could spend their way out of a recession. They thought they could simply ignore everyone's advice and decide they were right.

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): That was your line, not ours.

Mr Mahoney: You did it, I say to the Minister of Housing, another classic example of someone who could have done something for this province, for this economy, by delaying the implementations to the building code. I know it upsets her when I say this, but all they asked for in the building industry was to delay the requirement to put insulation from the ceiling to the floor in a basement, where up to now it has gone down to the frost line, just delay it and save \$3,000 to \$5,000 cost in a house.

Hon Ms Gigantes: Wrong, wrong.

Mr Mahoney: It's not wrong, Minister. I have seen nothing from you to prove me wrong; I have all the stats. I know you're just going to stick your head in the sand and say you don't really care about that industry. All you want to do is give more money to non-profit housing, because of your socialist dogma, because of your mentality that simply says you've got it right and you're the only one who knows, you're going to work all of this out. I have just tremendous confidence in you, you can rest assured. I'm quite sure that if she disagrees with me, she must think she's right, because we would never agree on issues of economic development and growth. We would never agree on ways to try to help the housing industry and in turn try to help the consumer trying to buy a house.

Hon Ms Gigantes: That's too bad.

Mr Mahoney: I can assure you of that, because you

want them all in your nice little communes, all sitting there being subsidized.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: I would ask the honourable members in the House, first, not to have interjections. Second, please address the Chair. I think we can end the kind of back-and-forth discussion we've had up to this point.

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): Mr Speaker, I am a patient individual—

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Mahoney: Oh, Randy's going to lose his temper. Oh boy, I can hardly wait for that.

One of the things I said earlier, when the Treasurer made his opening remarks about protecting jobs, was that it's interesting that the very document we're talking about here today sets up a fund to top up unemployment insurance payments to people. Why would you do that if you're protecting their jobs?

Interjection.

Mr Mahoney: Well, for those jobs you don't protect. Why don't you say it's partially a job protection fund? But it's not a job protection fund. And how in the world you can ever say you're protecting services is just mind-boggling. Let me give you some examples.

This is a report that was done, and it's going to have to be updated, but it was a report that was done for my own city council by staff on the potential service level implications. We know they're not protecting jobs, because they've set up an unemployment insurance top-up fund to try to pay for those people who lose the jobs. We know that. Now, are they protecting service levels? Here's the impact, potentially. It could be worse; it could be a little better. We'll see. The proof will be in the pudding.

To Mississauga Transit, a cut of 43,200 operating hours in the bus services in our city. Is that important to these people who get driven to work in a limo or to those who perhaps just live down here when they're working here? They don't need a bus to get to work. They don't need to worry about that. Is that important to the people who live and work close to home, where they don't need a bus?

Let me tell who it affects. I hear the platitudes about protecting the people who would be most affected by these cuts. This is what this government is purporting to do. The people who will be most affected by this are the people who have no option but to use public transit. What are they going to do, hitchhike when they go to the doctor, when they go shopping or to the grocery store, when they take their kids to the doctor, when they take, in many cases, their teenage kids to school who don't have busing, who have to use public transit? In fact, what we need is a situation where we have an integration more of our school busing system and our

public transit system in communities like mine, in communities all over the province, so that we can reduce the cost to the school boards. That is a positive suggestion that could work.

But instead, by just blindly making a cut without even understanding—the member for Halton Centre earlier asked the Treasurer: “Have you done the studies to determine what the impacts are?” We haven’t had an answer to that. We went through eight weeks of negotiations at the Royal York, subsequently several more weeks of fumbling around and introducing this legislation. Subsequent to that, we’ll go through several more weeks of trying to find more cuts, and there haven’t been any studies. I think the member was incredulous when she said in response to the Treasurer, “I don’t think he has done the studies.”

How can you justify making cuts without knowing what the impacts are? You leave it to the local community to find out what the impacts are and then you set up some broad sectoral table that’s so far removed from the local community. They don’t know the impact on that local community, and you try to pretend that you’re protecting the people who need your help. The people who are stuck and need transit service in my community are not going to have it with these cuts. Forty-three thousand hours: That’s a lot of time; that’s a lot of buses that will be taken off.

All I say is, if you want to make that decision, then make the decision knowing that you’re going to hurt those people. Don’t try to pretend that you’re making these cuts and they won’t hurt anybody, when you know they will, or you should know.

Fire protection: In Mississauga, the result of the original go-round of these cuts is nine additional staff absent each day. Are we overstaffed in the Mississauga fire department? Talk to the union out there. I know them quite well. I don’t think they would tell you they’re overstaffed; but nine additional fire staff absent each day.

The removal of area number 1 from service: Let me tell you where that is. Area number 1 is in Malton in an industrial area. What it means is there will be no fire protection for that industrial area. Is that what we want? That’s what the city is faced with. It’s fine for you to sit down here in your ivory tower and just tell them they’ve got to cut globally without knowing the impact, but there’s going to be no fire protection in that particular community. Imagine that in 1993. I just find that incredible.

Planning and development: an interesting one, one that I don’t think these people would care about if they understand it.

An increase in the turnaround time for building permits: Someone will say: “Look at that. Mahoney is fighting on behalf of the builders and the developers.”

The interesting thing is, yes, I am, frankly, to a degree. But you know why? Because when they get a building permit and they build a house, it becomes a home for somebody, somebody buys it, and I don’t think that in today’s society—when we lost \$700 million in revenue through provincial sales tax the first year this government was in office, and \$300 million in revenue the first year it was in office in reduced land transfer tax revenue, what does that mean?

That means when someone buys a house, he pays land transfer tax to the provincial government. We lost the taxpayers \$300 million. Does that mean that maybe we should find a way to get that money back? What do you think?

1600

It seems like a good idea to me, and maybe the way to do that is to take a look at the planning process. So what do they do? They call up their good buddy the former mayor John Sewell and they say: “Here’s \$3 million and here’s a plan. Go on out there and examine the planning process and come back to us and tell us how we can streamline it.”

The intention was to find a way, I would think, to improve the turnaround time for building permits. I’m assuming that was the intention. Maybe I’m wrong. Maybe the intention was to create more red tape to slow down development so that they could increase the allocation of non-profit and co-op housing and forget the private sector. Let’s face it, the private sector’s been driven out of day care, the private sector certainly has been driven out of building rental accommodation and, I would add, and I would frankly come clean on this, that I believe that your party—

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): That’s a change. You’re going to come clean? Talk about someone who is going to come clean. He has finally admitted it.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Mahoney: I believe that your party, Mr Cousens, implemented rent controls. You implemented rent controls, in all your excitement. You brought it in after you promised not to.

Mr Cousens: At last the Liberals themselves, a moment of history in the province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Mahoney: Our party exacerbated rent controls. Without a doubt our party exacerbated it, but these people have taken it to a new level that has simply driven people out of building rental accommodation.

Mr Cousens: Wait. I want to see it happen.

Mr Mahoney: I’m admitting that we were wrong in that. I’m admitting that you started the problem, and we made it worse, but these guys have taken it to a new level. All three parties are complicit in bringing in a system that has literally driven any private sector

individual or company out of building private rentals. You would have to be mad. Not only that; any promises that could be given by anybody in politics today that they were going to scrap it, I'm going to tell you that if I was an apartment builder, I'd say, "I don't believe you." So there's complicity on all three sides of this House on that issue. We should recognize that, and in my view we should take a very serious look.

If you want a royal commission, maybe that's one we should look at, although I don't like spending \$3 million to figure something out that's staring you right in the face. I think there are better solutions, but there are going to be as a result of these cutbacks—people won't think that's a big deal. The public out there thinks that when it gets asked this question, "Do you support Bob Rae and his cuts?" the way the question is asked is, "Do you think we have too many civil servants in this province?" The answer, "Yes." "Do you think we should cut the deficit by laying off civil servants in this province?" The answer, "Yes."

Ask it this way: "If we cut the care"—to the Minister of Health—"that is currently being provided to your mother, who suffers from Alzheimer's in a nursing home, and the only solution you have is to either pay for your mother's care yourself, extra money, or bring her home and take care of her in your home, and one of the spouses who happens to work has to leave work to come home, do you support that? Do you support that if there's a delay in needed surgery times?"

What did we hear today? My goodness, the potential of closing anywhere from one to ten hospitals. I don't believe that, maybe one or two, which would be catastrophic—

Mr Hope: Stop dramatizing.

Mr Mahoney: It's not dramatizing. That's the point. They think it dramatizing. You just don't get it. It's not dramatizing it.

Let me give you one that maybe you'll understand. Do you support the cuts if it means increasing the size of the kids' class from 30 to 40? Answer the question. Some people think that's fine. I talked to an educator the other day who said that she taught—she's retired now—40 kids in the class and it didn't affect them. If that's the case, is that what society believes? Is that what our Minister of Education and Training believes? Is that what Richard Johnston believed when he served on the select committee on education that I served on with him? That's not what I heard. That's not what I heard at all.

What I've heard every stakeholder in education in this province say to me, just about every one, is that if we can somehow reduce the size of the classes, it'll give the teachers an opportunity for more instruction time with the kids.

The whole issue of streaming: Are you going to

destream and put 40 kids in a class at the same time? I'll tell you, I support destreaming up to and including grade 10 if it's the will of the local board, and it should be a local decision. I support it, but if you're going to start putting 40 kids in a class, I'd have to rethink it. I think it's dangerous. I think it's very dangerous.

Do you support these cuts if it means we have to lay off police? Because it does.

Ask the question properly. We all believe the civil service is too large. We all believe government is too large and interferes in our lives too much. I sure do.

I had a meeting the other day with a couple of friends of the government, the two gentlemen who run the Workplace Health and Safety Agency. I've asked questions in the House of the minister, and I believe everybody in this House supports the principle, and this is just an example of the kind of regulatory agency and regulatory problems that you are creating in implementing what was intended to be good legislation, Bill 208. It was intended to be good legislation that would say to the working—

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): You changed it.

Mr Mahoney: Well, if you don't like Bill 208—because you didn't like it when you were over here; I recognize that—why don't you cancel the agency and save the six and a half million bucks you're spending, if it's no good? I mean, what do you want? You want it both ways?

I think these guys are trying to do a decent job, but the implementation, from a business person's point of view, guess what he or she gets in his or her mail. They get a notice from the occupational health and safety agency that says: "Welcome to NDP Ontario. We're going to train you in how to prevent accidents and how to be healthier, and if you don't do it our way, we're going to fine you half a million bucks and put you in jail." That's what it said.

Mr Hope: Right.

Mr Mahoney: Well, you can laugh, but that's what it said. Then they opened up their next letter, and the next letter, and I said this is Mr McMurdo, the next letter they opened up, they opened it up and it said: "We want to update the information on your corporation, so enclosed you will find some forms to fill out that we'd like you to send in so we can punch it all into our computers. And oh, by the way, enclose a cheque for \$50 made out to the Treasurer."

Every company, no matter how big it is, in the province got this notice just grabbing 50 bucks out of its pocket. Unbelievable.

Now, can you imagine? Some of you have worked in business, maybe even owned a business. Can you imagine how frustrated you'd be? You'd sit there: "I don't believe this. On the one hand, I'm sitting here trying to pay my taxes to stay alive, to keep my people

working. This government just stole \$50 out of my pocket for nothing, and now they're threatening to put me in jail if I don't set up a committee and send somebody off to some course for training."

Is improved occupational health and safety training wrong? No. How you implement that is the key. I'm pleased to say to the Minister of Labour that I was assured by the two gentlemen, the co-chairs who came in to see me, that they are doing in-service training right on the job of their program for health and safety.

I don't like some of the stuff they're training them on. I don't understand why they're spending half a day talking about how laws are made. I don't understand what in the world that has to do with running a chemical company or a steel plant or a small business, but they insist that's part of the training. I guess they want to make friends with everybody and teach them how legislation is done. But maybe I'm being nitpicky on that. I'll agree to that. Yes, maybe on that I am. They've got to put a training program together and they've got to keep people interested. I understand from them, and they're going to get me testimonials, that some of the training that's been done has been very successful.

1610

Nobody argues with the principles of Bill 208. Indeed I had quite a battle, quite an argument about Bill 208 when we were the government, and fought with the then Minister of Labour and fought with the Premier and we made changes to it. We appointed a neutral Chair who quit in disgust because he saw what you were doing. We eliminated the unilateral right that some worker who was having a bad day could just shut down the operation because he or she—

Mr Hope: Oh, I'm sure.

Mr Mahoney: Well, that's what it said. We eliminated that and we worked with the business community to come up with a plan that made sense. We said, "Here's Bill 208, business will tell you"—and this does affect, by the way, the social charter because it's all about confidence, it's all about impact, it's all about taxation levels, it's all about regulation levels, it's all about surviving in this economy.

If this government could only look at deregulation, if it could only look at a system where it could work hand in glove with the private sector to make the necessary tools available for better occupational health and safety training, it would find it could do it for a lot less than six and a half million bucks. The agency's gone from zero to \$6.5 million, like that.

There are all kinds of areas. You all know I have a private member's bill that I introduced to repeal the Ombudsman Act. Ten million dollars a year: It's not a lot of money, but if everybody around here would do that, it would be a lot of money. What are we doing?

The Ombudsman service is a fine service but can we afford it today?

My argument is that there are 130 ombudsmen in this place and if we're doing our job, what do we use the Ombudsman for, we MPPs, when that person sits across from us at our desks and we have to say: "Look, I'm sorry, I can't help you. I've tried. I've written letters. I've fought for you. It's over. I can't help you any more." Instead of saying that and having the courage to say that—

Mr Hope: Oh, no, no, no.

Mr Mahoney: Oh, many members in this place turn around and say, "Well, I tell you what, I'll send you to the Ombudsman." We can't afford that any more. It's just a luxury that should not exist around here.

That's not a particular comment about any of the individuals involved. I think the Ombudsman service, dating back to Mr Maloney—all of the ombudsmen have had a particular place and have done the job as they saw fit. We may differ with how some of them do it from time to time. We may differ when our current Ombudsman puts ads up on billboards and tries to look for problems, but that's not what the issue is. The issue is that when you're trying to develop a social contract you have to show the people that you've looked at your own operations, that you've looked in the mirror.

I don't think this government has done that. What this government has done is that it has simply said to all the so-called—and you'd better stop calling them partners out there because you're not treating them like partners. You wouldn't do that kind of thing to a partner; imagine. What they've done is that they've simply passed it on down to the former partners, we'll call them, of government and told them to find the solutions.

There are direct impacts and the people will know them and the day will come, because your phones are going to ring off the wall in your constituency offices, let me tell you, saying: "I had no idea that the social contract cuts were going to mean this. I've got my sick mom at home now. What am I going to do with her?"

We can go back and say that everybody should just be responsible for that, or we can understand that we live in a society where we're better off to have good quality health care for sick mom and allow the individual to work and generate income and pay taxes and try to help support the system. That's not what's going to happen under this.

A simple thing like libraries: We heard the minister the other day—yesterday, I think it was—stand up and make an announcement about aboriginal libraries, that there were going to be improved services. The reality is that in my community libraries are going to close, books are going to stay in the basement. It's been a problem for years that they've faced, but what choice do they

have?

If you're giving them a choice, if you're listening to them, if you listen to the municipalities—I hear the Premier today in answer to my question about the impact of these cuts on the municipalities. He stands up and says: "Boy, I don't know, when the municipalities talk to me they're really friendly. They don't tell me there's a problem. They say they can work this out."

Well, I've got a news flash. June 14, here it is, a news release from AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Don't believe me. I didn't make it up. It's from Joe Mavrinac, the president, the mayor of Kirkland Lake, and he says:

"We question how much help this will be to municipalities, which have to deal with enormous cuts to their transfer payments," said Joe Mavrinac, president of AMO and mayor of the town of Kirkland Lake."

"He went on to say: 'Municipal employer representatives stayed at the talks.'"

They didn't walk away with all the unions. Why didn't you keep talking to them? Why didn't you carry on the talks? They wanted to be part of the process, just like the conservation authorities I referred to earlier, just like the school boards. Everybody wants to be part of the solution to this problem, instead of having a cut, a knife come down from on high, telling them what they're going to have to do. That's the real, obvious unfairness to this.

Joe went on to say, "Municipal employer representatives stayed at the talks and remained committed throughout the process to working out a solution with the government to cut the deficit, save services and jobs and ensure no tax increases."

If you're trying to figure out how to build a better mousetrap, you should probably go to someone who's already built a mousetrap and say, "How can we improve on this?" Why don't you go to the municipalities and say, "I don't know how you guys did it, but you managed to bring in no tax increases to your citizens," or, in the case of my city, a 1% tax decrease. "I don't know how you did it. Tell us how you did it."

Mr Cousens: How big are your reserves?

Mr Mahoney: The reserves are big. Don, but they didn't use reserves to do it. If they had, I'd admit that. They're in this position, though, because—here's a real cute idea—about 15 years ago we in our municipality decided we were going to set up reserves for a number of things so that we wouldn't have to borrow the money 10 or 15 years down the road to buy whatever it was, whether it's replacing automobiles in the public works department—cars wear out, trucks break down, so we have a reserve.

Every year, you take a certain amount of money out of your current budget and you put it in your capital reserve budget. In real life, I guess it's called savings.

You put it there and you say: "We're not going to touch that. As tempting as it is, we're not going to touch that. We're going to have to tell the people that they're going to have to wait for that arena, for that community centre. Even though there are a lot of lot levies generated and the moneys go into reserves, they're going to have to wait five years until the population reaches a certain level."

Why don't you go to them? Not just my city. North Bay, I understand, has gone on a debt reduction plan over the past 10 years where it's taken its debt from \$50 million in debentures down to \$29 million. That's pretty dramatic. On anybody's chart that would be a line that goes down, instead of a line that constantly goes up like yours and runs off the page. Why don't you go to these people and talk to them? Are you too proud? Is that the trouble? I recognize that your revenues are down. I recognize that the recession has had a devastating impact on the treasury over there. I understand that.

But what you've got to do is find out how to get those revenues up again. What are your solutions? "We'll get our revenues up. We'll increase taxes." Wrong. You will find—and I'm telling you, you want to look this up in Hansard if you care—that your revenues will go down as a result of your increasing taxes. You just don't get it. I don't know why. You've got a problem, a serious problem. Why not look at that? Why not sit down with the municipal sector? Why not sit down with the hospitals? I don't see any of the Windsor members here. What has Windsor got, five hospitals servicing that community? They sat down with their health advisers and the district health council and said: "This is nuts. We don't need five hospitals to service the people in Windsor. How do we downsize?"

Interjection: You answered yourself in your question.

Mr Mahoney: Well, I'm happy if I answered it. It came from the community. They didn't need you to come in with a hammer and go, "Boom, we're going to fix you guys." Shouldn't we find ways where those hospitals share service levels? Maybe one hospital's particularly good, whether it's in medical research or treating cancer or paediatrics, whatever it is. Why should all five be doing the same stuff together? What about a central stores? I know they talked about that in Windsor. I was there. I talked to the people at the chamber of commerce. They said: "We think it makes sense. Why not have a central stores available where all medical supplies can come in and then be distributed?"

1620

They're looking at rationalization at the community level. They understand the fact that they're part of the problem and they want to be part of the solution. There are all kinds of examples all over the province, and this government simply fails to look at them, thinks it can come in with a hammer and that's going to solve it.

It will backfire. There will be catastrophic impacts in the community. I tell you, while I believe very, very strongly that your deficit has to be brought under control, there's more than one kind of deficit in this world. There's a deficit in human services, there's a deficit in community services.

What are you going to say to the kid who's pounding on the door at 3 o'clock in the morning, trying to get into a children's aid shelter? "Sorry, son, no room." He's going to say, "But my dad just beat the heck out of me and my mom's run away from him because he's violent to her too, and I have nowhere to go." This is not dramatizing a problem. This is going to happen and you know it's going to happen.

One thing I will say that I believe about New Democrats, and I've said it before, is that they do have a heart. At times it bleeds too much and it's a little too big, but they do have a heart. I don't believe any one of you would be callous enough, unlike at times my friends in the third party, to want to strip social service networks, to want to strip safety nets from the people who need them the most. I just don't believe you really want to do that. I can only assume you don't understand that this is going to be what comes out at the bottom end in those service cuts.

I heard a radio commentator this morning say basically that. I won't mention his name, because he's too much of a socialist for me, but he's on in the morning on CFRB, so you can figure it out. He said, "The problems are going to start showing up in a couple of months' time and they're going to show up in the form of more problems with our youth, fewer police officers to work with our young offenders."

He had somebody phone in from the young offenders' office who gave the impact on the cutbacks. In fact, the cutbacks in the time this individual was going to experience were going to save the government, on his salary alone, something like \$1,400. They can't eliminate the service, so the only way they can deal with his time off is to bring in somebody else to work overtime to cover for him. It's actually going to cost almost \$1,000 more to replace the laid-off—or the time off, whatever you want to call it—individual. You see, the economics are kind of backwards. It just doesn't cut it. This thing is going to end up costing you more money.

You're going to lose revenue because of your increased taxes on business. We see it every day. We know businesses are leaving. This Minister of Labour stood up in this House and defended with such vigour Bill 40. I congratulate him, because he had to deliver amendments to the Ontario Labour Relations Act to the unions or he was in deep trouble. Never mind Bob Rae; this minister, a former member of the Steelworkers union, was in deep trouble if he didn't stick to his guns and deliver that. The minister and others say, "It hasn't had a great impact." It's because the companies that are

leaving are not sending in farewell cards to the government. They're not even telling you. The reason for that is that they may not be leaving in their entirety. They may be leaving some kind of operation here. Some of them even do business with the government, with municipal governments, with school boards. They don't want you to know they're leaving and going to the United States, but believe me, they are, and the impact of them leaving, in the long term, is quite catastrophic to the business infrastructure in this province.

More than that, how do you ever measure and quantify the number of business decisions that are made not to invest here? The Premier stands up and says, "Be proud of Ontario." I think every member in this House is proud of Ontario. I don't think that should be an issue. This Premier has a nerve to say that to a member in opposition, because we criticize. You know what that's like? That's like Kim Campbell standing up and saying, "If you don't agree with me, you're just an SOB." That's what I heard him say today. It's the same thing. He said, "If you stand up and shout about the problems in this province, then you're not proud of this province." That is so unfair and unPremier-like. He should be forced to come in this House and withdraw those remarks and apologize. It's really unfortunate, because we're all proud of Ontario.

I said the other day that I believe Ontarians are some of the hardest-working men and women in the world. Sure, we have our problems. Our welfare lines have swollen because of the recession or depression, our unemployment insurance lines have swollen for the same reason. And at a time when a government should be saying to people, "We understand your worries. We understand your problems. We recognize the fact that the economy is suffering," this government should be doing things to encourage business.

Maybe some form of amendments to the OLRA could have been put through at an appropriate time. Not the draconian ones of eliminating secret ballots and democracy in the trade labour movement, but some of the issues perhaps could have been put forward. There's nothing wrong with organizing in a positive way. Lord knows, I grew up in a union. I understand the benefits of the trade labour movement to the working men and women. But the reality is that you don't have a good union or a good relationship when you polarize the relationship between the business community and the labour movement. In fact, what you do is you take away the opportunity to protect jobs. How do you protect a job when the business closes? I don't understand that.

I know how they do it. They take some money out of Ontario Hydro and they buy the company. They help the workers buy the company. Then my good friend Leo Gerard, national director of the Steelworkers, stands up in Sault Ste Marie when the deal was done in Algoma Steel and says, "It's a great day for worker control."

That's what he said. That's the scary part. That's the dogma that the people of Ontario do not want to see in their government. They don't mind it if Leo says it, but they don't want to see it in their government. Yet you're applauding that type of attitude. You're encouraging it. You're fostering it. You're not building any sense of confidence or opportunity for growth for the future of this province.

To get back to the municipalities' concerns about the social contract, Joe Mavrincac goes on to say, "This legislation provides us with little assurance that savings will be found in compensation. For many municipalities, a wage freeze will not provide the savings needed to offset the cuts, especially in this fiscal year."

I wish the Treasurer were here. I understand why he's not; he's been under siege. The man has been under a tremendous amount of pressure. He's admitted that this is very difficult stuff for him, and I understand that. I feel some sympathy for the fact that he's under that kind of pressure, because it's really not the Treasurer who's orchestrating this. He's being pushed out the door. It's the guy with the propeller on the beanie behind him—the Premier—pushing him out the door, saying: "You go out there. I don't want to go. That's tough stuff." Poor Floyd. For goodness' sake, we all know him to be a gentleman and an honourable man. We may disagree with some of his policies, but we all know him to be a decent person. He's being pushed out the door by the Premier saying, "You get out there and take the flak."

The fact is that the wage freeze is not going to solve the problem. Let me tell you one of the things that we're all concerned about, 1996. Let's jump ahead, away from the movie "Queen's Park," away from the dinosaurs. They've all blown up. The asteroid has hit the planet Ontario and all of the dinosaurs in the third party and in the government have been destroyed and we're starting over again, trying to rebuild this infrastructure which has been torn apart. In 1996 the contracts all of a sudden all open up again. The social contract is finished.

What is this government doing? They've introduced a bill known around here as CECBA. It has to do with bargaining rights for civil servants. They're giving the civil servants the right to strike that they do not currently enjoy. I had a meeting the other day with the Deputy Minister of Labour, a fine fellow. I appreciated his sincerity. I asked him the question, "Do you have any concerns about that?" He feels that there's good justification for putting forward those amendments. That's his job. I respect that. My concern is that in 1996, when these people have got the right to strike and they're operating under Bill 40, under the OLRA, there will be a shutdown of this province of a magnitude that we've never seen before.

Talk to me about GO Transit. We saw the other day what a one-day walkout on the job did to the service level of GO Transit. It literally shut down the commuter system in the GTA: couldn't get to work, jammed the highways, chaos, disruption, people late for work. I hope nobody got fired. That was a one-day walkout, an illegal one, because they don't have a right to strike. So they all said they were sick at the same time. I guess it was the GO flu or something.

All of a sudden the trains aren't going. If they are going, they don't stop at the right stations; they just bypass. Imagine that, you're waving to the wife and kids or your husband is there to pick you up after work, and you're waving as you go by, and the train goes right by: ding, ding, ding, ding, ding. It doesn't stop. That's what happens.

We have a potential with the amendments this minister introduced the other day—I don't know if I have them all here. Under the amendments to that contract—they're here somewhere—that is going to give the workers an opportunity to strike.

What's that going to mean? That's going to mean that those workers are going to come back and say: "Look, we've just been through the toughest times in labour history, and we can't believe that it was a labour government that put us through it. We've had our contracts reopened. We've had our rights to collective bargaining stripped. We've had our democratic process taken away from us. We're not going to take it any more." The next government is going to sit there and face this reaction, and say, "Well, look, these guys left us with a bigger mess than we ever could have imagined."

In fact, the debt in September 1990 for this province was \$39 billion; too high, but it was manageable. The debt service was about nine cents on the dollar; manageable. The debt currently is \$78 billion or \$79 billion, climbing towards the century mark. Without a doubt, the next government that inherits office in the province of Ontario will be saddled with a debt of federal proportion, with a debt service that could be in the range of 20 cents to 25 cents out of every single dollar.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): What a debt, hey, Steve.

Mr Mahoney: Well, look, that's the fact. That's what's going to happen. That's the course you set for yourself when you took over the ship.

Mr Marchese: A sinking one.

Mr Mahoney: It wasn't sinking at all. It was a debt with nine cents on the dollar. That's not a sinking ship. My goodness, Ottawa pays 34 or 35 cents. That's a sinking ship. The fact of the matter is that the province of Ontario was the most dynamic engine for industry, for growth, for workers, for jobs, for men, for women, for young people, for seniors, in the entire country, and

now—

Hon Richard Allen (Minister without Portfolio in Economic Development and Trade): And you messed it up.

Mr Mahoney: Well, it's really ironic. I guess nothing you guys have done in two and a half years has caused a problem. It is really interesting the way you constantly find ways to justify your existence, to justify your budgets. Imagine planning a deficit of \$10 billion a year.

Then, on top of that, how do you pay off the deficit? You take the deficit and you say, "I'm going to pile it on top of the debt." That's like taking your overdraft and putting it on top of your mortgage. You might get away with that for one or two years, but you're not going to get away with that for very long. Unfortunately, that's what you've tried to do.

The municipalities claim—Joe Mavrinac and all the municipalities—that a wage freeze will not provide the savings needed to offset the cuts, especially in this fiscal year. Understand the problem here: The fiscal year for all municipalities is December 31, set by the government of Ontario. Not set by them; set by the province. The fiscal year-end for the province is March 31, again set by the province.

We've got a problem. If you want to make cuts in a year for annual savings, you cannot expect the municipalities to do it when half of their year is already gone. They've already spent the budget. The fact of the matter is that the municipalities have the authority to spend a certain percentage of their budget before they set it, because you can't close down. You get a snowstorm and, you've got to get the equipment out. You can't shut off the water taps. You can't tell the cops to go home. You can't tell the firefighters to leave the fire and let the house burn. You have to keep some continuity. So they continue on with their process. They've already spent over half of their budget by the time you guys get around to saying, "You've got to make cuts."

The date you've set is August 1. I'm not a mathematician, but you don't have to be awfully bright to figure out that if you want a year's cuts in six months, you've got to double the amount of cut. You've got to double the amount of hurt. You've got to cut your services twice as much as you might have had to cut them if you were given an opportunity to make these cuts within a responsible fiscal period.

At least the Treasurer should go the municipalities and say, "We're going to respect and honour your fiscal year and the cuts will be made based on the number of months left in that fiscal year on a pro rata basis." At the very least, he should do that.

Let me just talk about the bargaining process, because there's some concern about that. You would have thought that this government of New Democrats, more

than any, because they purport to be the representatives of big and small labour and the people who champion the workers—mind you, I don't accept that. In fact, I reject it categorically.

I believe that the rank and file on the floor of all the shops and the plants around this great province are not New Democrats, they're not Liberals, they're not Tories. Most of them don't have a card and don't want one. Most of them are pretty cynical. Most of them simply want to get through the shift. Most of them want to get their kids through school. Most of them just want to pay off the Visa, the mortgage, survive. That's all they want to do. They're not political animals like you and I. Most of them don't watch this stuff. They think we're nuts when we get up here and yell at one another. All they want to do is survive.

The rank and file on the floor, those who belong to unions who have been dissociating themselves from the NDP and cutting off the funding to the NDP, don't understand what's going on. Talk to the folks—and I know you sympathize with them, but sympathy doesn't put food on the table—at the Scarborough van plant. Talk to the people in Niagara Falls. Talk to the people in my community, all over this province, who have lost their jobs.

The minister has a puzzled look on her face. Don't be puzzled. As a former labour representative of OPSEU you, among all—it's incredible to us that you and the current Labour minister can actually stand up and support destroying what you worked your whole careers to build up. It's really quite remarkable. But it's your decision and it's your right to make that decision. I frankly don't have a problem with your making it, as long as you understand the impact. The impact is to destroy the infrastructure of our communities. The impact is to destroy what organized labour has worked so hard to build up.

I have a fair amount of sympathy for the labour movement.

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): Oh, oh, oh.

Mr Mahoney: I do. The members can say I don't, but I do. I understand.

I was there in Sudbury when the Steelworkers raided the Canadian Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. I talked to the men and women on the street. The member for Sudbury arrives. I was there in Sudbury. I went through some of the battles. It was a difficult time. There's still some comeback, I think, in Sudbury, over that particular raid.

The trade labour movement, though—think about it. Back in the 1960s, the Steelworkers actually negotiated a seven-year contract with Inco and with Algoma and with Stelco in District 6 of the United Steelworkers. Imagine that.

Mr Sorbara: Who was the head of the Steelworkers

then?

Mr Mahoney: The head of the Steelworkers then was a guy by the name of Bill Mahoney.

Mr Sorbara: Great labour leader.

Mr Mahoney: Very pragmatic. Not some dogmatic, philosophically driven—

Mr Sorbara: Bob Rae type.

Mr Mahoney: —Bob Rae type or Bob Mackenzie type or Leo Gerard type. What we've got is that the leadership in the labour movement has got you guys under control, has got you in a stranglehold, and now you're trying to break loose. You're trying to show everybody that they don't control you.

So what do you do? At the same time as you're kicking them in the shins, you hand them a little sop called the right to strike for civil servants. So you're kicking them and you're saying: "Guys, don't worry about it. We know we're not going to be the government in 1996. These other guys are, and you will have an opportunity to get even with them. We're going to get it all back for you."

1640

In fact, picture this: Picture Bob Rae with a placard, walking up University Avenue, leading 10,000 OPSEU and CUPE workers, solidarity for ever, as he marches saying: "We've got to take on those nasty Liberals. We've got to get you your money back." It's going to happen, as sure as I'm standing here.

Maybe Bob Rae will quit and leave town. Maybe he won't even be around, but somebody—which one of you guys? Peter Kormos, the only New Democrat left that I know of, the only New Democrat left.

They shake their heads. Are you telling me that you're a New Democrat and you're voting for Bill 48, I say to the member from Sudbury, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour? Unbelievable. You know that Steel will look at you and say, "Well, I'll tell you one thing. I'm glad you're not doing this to us." You know that.

Ms Murdock: They've already lost.

Mr Mahoney: You know why they've lost? Because the economy is down the tubes, the economy is down the drain, because what do you do? You bring in all of this legislation, you bring in the implementation of good legislation and you destroy it. That's what you do. You guys, honestly.

Ms Murdock: Oh, please.

Mr Mahoney: Well, you do. Do something that would generate some economic growth. Do something. You've got probably, I say with great respect, one of your most competent ministers in the Economic Development and Trade portfolio and I haven't seen a statement out of that ministry since this House sat. What's happening over there? Is there any new investment

coming into this province?

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): We're making statements outside the House.

Mr Mahoney: They're making statements outside of the House because they haven't got the guts to make them in here. Isn't that the truth? "Let's have a press conference." They can't even get that right. We had a minister yesterday make a statement on something that was totally irrelevant to the document that had been delivered to our critic; totally wrong.

I said yesterday that they can't even run a hot dog stand, and then I apologized to Monte Kwinter. As he said, "There's nothing wrong with Kwinter hot dogs," so I'll take all of that back.

I don't know what you can run, but you sure can't run this government. Maybe you can run the trade labour movement. Maybe you can run unions. Maybe you can go back to that. That would probably be good.

Mr Sorbara: There are no openings left there for those guys.

Mr Mahoney: They can run, though. You see, all those people at the top of the trade labour movement are elected and these guys are all now experienced politicians. Maybe they can run for those jobs.

That brings up a point that one of the most interesting, fascinating things is how this government treats the duly elected labour leaders. As the son of a duly elected labour leader for 26 years—dad was head of the Steelworkers, an elected position; he had to campaign all across Canada for that job—I understand what it means to be a labour politician. It's tough stuff.

You walk into a union hall in Hamilton or in Brantford or in Timmins, and boy, they're saying: "What have you done for me lately? What have you done for my benefits? What have you done with the government? What have you done to increase my wage package? What have you done to improve life for my kids? What have you done, Mr or Mrs Labour Leader?"

You know what they have to say? I feel sorry for Sid Ryan, a nice Irish fellow. Sid Ryan has to say: "What I've done for you lately is I've got into bed with a government that's totally destroying everything I've fought and you've fought to build up over the past many years. What I've done for you lately is I've had to sit across a sectoral table and watch the New Democrats, that I used to support"—remember Sid Ryan? "Bob Rae, I will never forgive you." Is that what he said? "I will never forgive you, Bob Rae."

I'd love to be a fly on the wall in Gananoque this weekend, let me tell you. Premier Lankin on Monday morning, that's what I think we're heading for: Premier Lankin. Go and get fitted for the robes right now; we're going to have a ceremony. We'll bring you in here, we'll get the horse and carriage, and we'll have a new

Premier.

I've got to tell you, I don't know how Rae is going to survive that. I'll bet he's at home putting on that tacka-dacka, whatever it is, that suit of armour the Minister of Labour wears to try to protect himself. I'll bet when he walks in, there'll be someone on his back covering him as he walks into the place. He's got to be nervous.

Mr Sorbara: But who's going to be more right-wing, Premier Lankin or Prime Minister Campbell?

Mr Mahoney: I don't know. I haven't heard any statements out of Minister Lankin about economic development and growth, so I don't know, I can't answer that question about who would be more right-wing. It would be hard to be more right-wing than Bob Rae, though. It would be hard. He must have real serious trouble with his conscience.

Let me talk about the negotiation process, just to give an example of how we think this is such a muddle. Here we've got in this legislation direction to the municipalities and the school boards and the universities—by the way, they can find the money. They've tried to tell you that. They can find a lot of the savings, but they want to do it their way. They don't want a hammer brought down on them on August 1. As I said before, sit down and listen to them. They figured it out long before you. As usual, the people in the streets are miles ahead of their government. They sure are in this case.

But let me talk to you about the method. While they're negotiating at the table in the local community, there's going to be another Royal York Hotel. Somebody said the only people winning out of this are with the Royal York. They're making a lot of dough: Benihana, dinner every night; lots of egg rolls going out of there, I'll tell you. It looks great.

So there's going to be another sectoral table. Maybe it'll be in a tent out on the front lawn of Queen's Park. That's where it should be, because this is such a damn circus that you should conduct all this stuff in a tent.

Sorry, Speaker, I'll be careful. He doesn't like it when I use the vernacular.

So these sectoral negotiations are going to go somewhere with the eight groups. Who are they? Health, education, Ontario public service, community service, colleges, universities—they've even split colleges and universities into two sectors because they don't want them talking to one another; that'd be the worse thing that could happen—agencies, boards and commissions, known as ABCs, and municipalities.

Eight sectors are going to sit down and talk. Here's the deal for you: The Treasurer says—this is too much—"If we can get a sectoral agreement and we can then couple that with a local agreement, we'll give you a 20% discount." How do you like that? It's like running Honest Ed's. Fantastic. We've got some real

marketing agents over there. These guys are brilliant. But if you don't get the sectoral agreement at the same time as you get the local agreement, you're out of luck. You're going to pay the big bucks.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): The Leon's government event: Don't pay until 1996.

Mr Mahoney: Yes, the don't pay a cent event. There you go; unbelievable. Well, we're going to pay. They won't have to pay; they'll be history.

But what do you say to a municipality that says: "Look, we sat down and negotiated with our fire service and we got them to agree to a 0% raise for the first time in so long we can't remember. They've agreed to a wage freeze. We sat down with our inside and our outside workers and they've agreed we're going to shut down city hall for a couple of days; we're going to give people some time off. We've worked it out."

The sectoral group dealing with—who is it now? Peter Warrian? Michael Dexter? Whoever it is doesn't come to the same kind of agreement, because he's trying to put in place some broad-cut system that's going to just gut the local negotiation process. So you turn around and say: "Sorry, folks. We offered you 20% off the cuts but because the sectoral agreements at the Royal York," or the tent at Queen's Park or wherever it is, "haven't come to a head and been successful, we're not going to give you that discount."

What a convoluted process is being put in place. There will be negotiations—you can just picture it—going on all over the province. Everyone trying to figure out how to save money for this government when they've already told you. I started out with \$100 million in savings from the conservation authorities. You're ignoring that. The municipalities have told you how to save money. You're ignoring that. The school boards have said: "We can increase class sizes by one or two kids. It won't be too catastrophic and we can work our way through this." Why don't you work with them? Why don't you give them the 20% discount?

Why are you telling people you've got to cut these huge catastrophic cuts that are going to have a major impact on the service levels in the community, that are going to affect your kids and my kids and their kids? Why are you doing this? I just don't understand why you won't come up with a plan that can work.

1650

You know what else is going to happen? We talked about the right to strike. Any of you who have been through negotiations with a union, and I assume most of you have, know about the issue of sick pay. You know about unions and workers that bank sick pay, which then becomes an unfunded liability by the employer, in most cases by a municipality or a school board. So you'll have a bunch of members of the particular sector with this huge unfunded liability.

The municipalities are trying to get out of that. In the fire service, the municipalities are coming along and saying, "Look, give us a break. If they're sick, fine, but no banking of sick days for new firefighters." That's one of the positions that's put forward every time you get into negotiations with the fire service. They don't like to give on that. It's a very important benefit to them. It's worth a lot of money. It means when they retire, they cash it in. Big dough. Big severance.

What you're creating here with these unpaid days off is another bank. You're going to have a sick day bank, number one; you're going to have an unpaid day bank, number two. You're actually creating an unfunded liability that your partners are going to have to deal with somewhere down the road. Where are they going to go? Can they go to their taxpayers? Mr Speaker, I ask you.

We had a demonstration on the front lawn today. The taxpayers are up in arms. They are saying, "Don't increase our taxes \$2 billion by the provincial government." Let me tell you, if any of you have ever been a municipal politician, you'll understand what it's like. They can get a hold of you there. You can't hide in the Legislature when you're on municipal council. Most times they can phone you at home. For a lot of your members, they don't even know the number of the offices.

Mrs Sullivan: Or they don't have an office.

Mr Mahoney: Or they don't have an office.

Mrs Sullivan: Their offices are closed three days a week.

Mr Mahoney: Sure. So the municipal people, I say to Mrs Harrington, are going to pay a tremendous price for this; tremendous pressure. They're going to come back to the next provincial government and say: "Look at what this has done. We now have a totally unmanageable situation." You see, it's not a matter even of financial bankruptcy; it's a matter of a bankruptcy of ideas. You have no solutions.

I've only got about eight minutes left. Oh, I found the CECBA notes, but I think I've already made that point.

I want to talk a little bit about the Health minister's Bill 50 and the broad powers Dr Ruth is going to enjoy under this bill. This is scary. We have some simple questions: What services will be cut? Medical services, we're talking about. How will they, the bureaucrats in the Ministry of Health, make the decisions? On what basis will they decide what services are medically necessary, and when did Ruth Grier become qualified to make those kinds of decisions? Where's her certificate in medicine?

One thing we should all try to do is do what we do best and stay the heck out of what we don't know anything about, yet we have a Health minister putting forward a bill that's going to literally give this minister

the power, by the stroke of a pen, to decide that certain medical procedures will not be covered—with no negotiations with the OMA, no discussions with the stakeholders, with no public discussions, for goodness' sake, with no opportunity for people to come in and ask questions about this. It's quite incredible.

I think this clearly points out the mentality of this government. It's the classic example of their lack of understanding. I was going to say lack of caring, but I won't, because I do believe you care. I just don't think you understand.

Look at what the government did to the interns. Now, who are the interns? The interns are not 55-year-old, \$250,000-a-year doctors. The interns are not the 65-year-old, 70-year-old doctors who are ready perhaps to retire, to do a little less work. The interns are the young men and women who have just come through 10 long, hard years of education to become a doctor.

Ms Murdock: Residents.

Mr Mahoney: Am I not right, I say to the member from Sudbury? That's not who the interns are? That's who the interns are, trust me. I knew you didn't understand.

Ms Murdock: They are the second-last year of medical school.

Mr Mahoney: But they're just coming through. You want to be picky: second-last year of medical school. Excuse me. They're interns, of course, but they're in the ninth or 10th year of their education to become a doctor. What do you do? You come out with a first policy that says that interns who come out of the system will only be allowed to bill 25% of the normal revenue.

Ms Murdock: Residents.

Mr Mahoney: No, I'll come to the changes. Originally you said 25%, and you tried to pretend that this was only if they wanted to do business here in Toronto. That's just not true. There are four areas where 42 doctor positions were opened up in southwestern Ontario for 380 family practitioners coming out of the intern program—42 places. Everybody else in the province, whether they operated in Gananoque, Timmins or Thunder Bay, was going to be allowed to bill 25%.

I raised it. Others raised it. Our critic, Barbara Sullivan, raised it and met with them on a regular basis. They said, "How can they do this to us?"

Ms Murdock: Easy.

Mr Mahoney: "Easy," the member says. Yes, it is easy. That's the trouble: It's too darn easy for this government to make those kinds of callous decisions without understanding the impact. Talk to the mothers and fathers who have helped those young people go through med school.

Then you came back and you said: "Tell you what, I guess we're a little harsh. What we're going to do is

we're going to turn it around and we'll let them bill 75 cents on the dollar, instead of 25, for an 18-month period," once again not based on locating in Toronto or in the highly populated areas, but wherever they locate. That's going to be the decision. So 75% of a regular doctor, but no negotiation. That's a pretty big chunk.

Why wouldn't you, say, look at the entry level of med school and say to the people who are thinking of becoming doctors: "I wouldn't advise this. We've got too many doctors already." People say to me at some of the receptions and events I've been at, "Oh, the doctors can pay." What about the young lawyers who come out and don't have a job? What about the engineers who come out and don't have a job?

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): Right on.

Mr Mahoney: Not "right on," I say to my friend from Brampton, because those young lawyers have options. Those young lawyers can go out and hustle for business. Those young engineers do not rely on the government for their income. That's the fundamental difference.

Ms Murdock: The doctors do and they pay their school on top of that.

Mr Mahoney: A doctor has no choice. A doctor bills OHIP or bills nobody.

Ms Murdock: That is true.

Mr Mahoney: You don't think that's true? Where else does a doctor bill, to the cabinet minister? They bill OHIP.

So you tell them, after they've been in school, after they've gone through all the heartache, after the public taxpayer has paid for their education, that they're out of business.

Ms Murdock: No, you tell them to go where they are needed. That is what you tell them.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Order.

Mr Mahoney: It's absolutely unbelievable. To hear the chirping over there, to hear these people try to defend that kind of crap just makes my blood boil. That is such nonsense and so unfair, and you know it. When you go home and talk to the mothers and fathers of those young men and women who have dedicated their life to medicine, I don't know how you do it. You must be embarrassed. You must be ashamed of Bob Rae, you must be ashamed of the NDP.

Use some common sense. Start at the beginning. Sit down with the doctors who have finished their careers and talk to them about how they can help. They would all help. They've all told me they would help. They'd be prepared to take reductions, they'd be prepared to take cuts, but those doctors who are at the end of their medical careers don't want you destroying the young men and women who are coming up to take their place.

Guess where they're going. They're going south of the border, and I don't blame them a bit. They'll see half the patients for twice the money, with all kinds of opportunity for growth, with all kinds of support for research dollars, with a wonderful life for their families, because you are driving them out of this province, just as you are driving out business, just as you are destroying confidence, just as you are destroying everything that means anything to anybody in this province of Ontario.

When that Premier stands there and says that because we criticize you we criticize Ontario, I say to that Premier: "Shame on you, Bob Rae. That is nonsense." We love this province. That's why we fight for it. We love the people of this province. That's why we're in politics. We care about our communities. We think you people are so wrongheaded. You're destroying everything we've all worked for to build in our communities.

1700

Hon Mike Farnan (Minister without Portfolio in Education and Training): More passion. More emotion. A little more emotion.

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: I'm telling you, you do make me angry. That's why maybe it seems a little passionate.

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: You can be cynical if you want and you can laugh if you want, and yes, I'm out of time, but I've got to tell you something: This opposition, led by Lyn McLeod, will fight you every step of the way on this bill and we're going to defeat this bill and defeat this government.

Mr Sorbara: Remember Alberta, if you're interested in the results in Alberta.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, order. Questions and comments.

Mr Cousens: The member from Mississauga West has given us the Liberal alternative to what the government's proposed in this bill. If you have been able to take from his comments what the Liberal alternative is, it would be nothing. I can sense the anger that the—

Mrs Sullivan: What's your position, Don?

Mr Cousens: You'll hear it shortly, and we do have a position. But I want to say, why haven't the Liberals till now come forward with any concrete proposals on what they would do to address the crisis that Ontario is in?

It's one thing to stand in opposition and be critical of everything, but it's quite another to be able to go back and come forward with responsible legislation and options. What I hear Mr Mahoney doing is continuing the whole sense that his leader has said. She says that the government must take steps to bring the deficit under control by reducing the total public sector wage

bill. Yes, that's fine, but I haven't heard how this group of Liberals would do it. They call for fiscal restraint and then they suggest you open up contracts and have real negotiations.

How much money are they going to get? What are you going to open up in those negotiations? You talk about contract-stripping and yet you're willing to come along and bring about legislation that would open those contracts. What I see the Liberals doing—and I would like the member from Mississauga West to explain how it is he isn't just sucking and blowing at the same time, with the Liberal presentation—what in fact you're really doing is wanting everything and yet you're offering nothing in return.

It's so easy to just be critical, as you have been. I was looking for something concrete from the Liberals and it has not been there and I think you owe us an apology for taking so much time to say nothing.

Mr Hope: There was one thing that was puzzling me a bit. As I listened to the comments made by the member from Mississauga, which I always find attractive, I was just waiting for the closing remarks for the Ontario flag to go over his shoulders and for him to hug himself in the Ontario flag. You missed a perfect opportunity for a photo shot.

But what I would like to ask the member from Mississauga, who makes reference to his leader, is that I've been still waiting and I've still been trying to find it in Hansard. I remember there was a comment made about 18 points, and I'm still trying to find the Liberals' 18 points to economic renewal or to bring this province under control. I'm still waiting to find those. I've been through Hansard and consistently I still have not heard the Liberals talk about those points. It would just be important to me.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): What about the relocation to Chatham?

Mr Hope: I hear the opposition heckling about what's going on with relocation to Chatham. There were just announced 200 additional jobs in the private sector that are going into my community, which is not dependent upon government operation. I compliment those people from private enterprise who have been able to see that Chatham is a prosperous place, contrary to the Liberal promise.

It's amazing that the members say, "What's happening?" Let me tell you how the Liberals plan on getting votes. The Liberal leader goes into Chatham after the AgriCorp announcements: "AgriCorp Carrot Held Out in Front of Chatham, Ontario Liberal Says," and he says they're going to buy votes in the next election. Vote for a Liberal and they'll get AgriCorp. What a very misleading way of trying to pursue the people, trying to identify what's going on around this issue.

In closing, to the member from Mississauga, I enjoy

your synopsis of what you're saying, but I just truly would ask if, in the two minutes—I thought in the 90 minutes you would have told us—but in the two minutes, at least give us a highlight of the 18 points the Liberals really feel are important.

Mr Callahan: Mr Speaker—

Interjections.

Mr Callahan: Mr Speaker, can I start over again? I'm not getting in here anyplace.

I want to say with reference to my friend from Mississauga West, one of the tragedies that the NDP does not understand is that you don't put everybody in the same basket. You could have done this in a very much more humane way with the young medical students. You could have said: "Okay, here's the rule: Those who just got into medical school, you will graduate and you will have an opportunity to serve your community, but we're going to put a total moratorium on medical students in the future." They didn't do that. This government seems to think that the way you deal with it is the axe and the retroactive stuff.

You know, people have rights. You take them away indiscriminately, without any sympathy or any understanding. But if it happens to be union rights, your union leaders coming to you and saying, "We'd like this," you're prepared to open up the entire barn.

Finally, I would like to say that you say you've heard no positive comments about how you could have dealt with this. Start collecting your debts. There's \$120 million in family benefits that were paid through fraud or mistake. You haven't collected a nickel of it. Why don't you take the lotteries that we see on television every night, and instead of giving people the full capital amount of \$13 million, give them a life annuity like they do in the States. Take 30% of it in tax immediately. Use that money, instead of immediately looking to the question of: "We've got to get that deficit down. Let's lay people off."

I tell you, you people are a fraud, an absolute fraud, in terms of you have lost your commitments, you've lost your principles, and I believe that people in the NDP who thought you stood for something are now burning their cards all over Ontario, and you will see it in the next election. We've seen 8% federally. We'll see less than that with you people in the next election.

Mr Stockwell: This is going to be a very acrimonious debate, I'm sure, as we wear on.

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: What?

Mrs Sullivan: Torysaurus.

Mr Stockwell: Oh, me? Jeez, I just heard from a—I won't even get into that debate. I think it was rather a silly comparison, Jurassic Park. I don't even think it was funny either, so I suppose that's why. But I think

it's going to be an acrimonious debate.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): If it was your line, you'd be laughing.

Mr Stockwell: Maybe I would be, but if it was my line it would have been funny.

Mr Callahan: You've got better lines, Chris.

Mr Mahoney: You're funnier than me, Chris. I agree with that.

Mr Stockwell: But I think we would be in a rather acrimonious debate, and I understand the position that the member from Mississauga West is putting forward in a lot of respects. I understand the arguments he makes. The dilemma that you're faced with in this—

Mrs Sullivan: How will you vote, Chris?

Mr Stockwell: Well, I think we'll probably end up voting in favour of the legislation, but I think there are going to be a significant number of amendments that we will move, because I think there's going to be a significant—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Stockwell: I think it's going to be a very difficult time and there's probably going to be a lot of amendments. I know there's going to be a lot amendments and public hearings to take place, and I think that is necessary. I don't believe that we can just simply stand idly by while the province crumbles, and I don't necessarily believe that this legislation is in its present form good legislation. I think it needs to be altered dramatically. If those alterations are taken, then I think you probably could find widespread support in the population of the province of Ontario.

Although I think Mr Mahoney gave an impassioned speech, and I think at times it bordered on a very decent speech, by the same token, the alternatives that were offered by the member were rather slim. They were truly rather slim. I suggest that by suggesting putting off the deficit, I don't think the world bankers will accept that argument any more, so you need something else.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Mississauga West, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr Mahoney: I thought there was another response.

The Deputy Speaker: Let me—one, two, three, four. That was four. You're the last one.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): One, two—

Mr Stockwell: Three, four.

The Deputy Speaker: Four. That's right.

Mr Mahoney: Hold it. Do it this way. Put your hand up in the air. One, two, three, four.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. You're using your two minutes.

Mr Mahoney: Thank you. I just want to help them. They asked me what I would do. One of the first things I would do is teach you how to count.

But anyway, let me thank the members on all sides for their comments and for their criticism, because that's what that time is for.

1710

Let me say to the member from Etobicoke West, at no time did I say, "Ignore the deficit," at no time did I say or would I say, "Ignore the problems of this province." I think they're catastrophic. I think you would agree with me that these guys have exacerbated and created these problems to a point where it's almost irretrievable. To the member—sorry about the riding: Mr Hope. I say to the member who says, "Give us some of the ideas," that I did. You weren't listening. Take it home tonight and read it. I'm sure it'll put you to sleep, but try and stay awake.

What I've asked is, sit down with the people who have offered you solutions. Sit down with the people in the municipal sector who tell you they can find you the money you need in the municipal sector without gutting their contracts, without creating layoffs. They are saying that. If they can't do it, then let it be on their heads, but they are saying that. Sit down with them. Turn to the people. Sit down with the conservation authorities, the very first thing I said in my opening, after I used the analogy that so offended the member opposite.

Let me just tell you, sit down with the people. There are all kinds of ways to get the economy going. Don't increase taxes, for God's sake, to try to increase revenues. The opposite will happen.

Report continues in volume B.

ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
31	1357	2	1	Mr Brunette, who came in to see me, and I thought
31	1357	2	2	"Well, here's a teacher;"—Moe Brunette's his name, one
31	1357	2	53	My friend Mr Brunette had indicated that he was there
31	1359	1	29	problem that Mr Brunette had brought to my attention in

CONTENTS

Thursday 17 June 1993

PRIVATE MEMBERS'		Political meeting		Highway tolls	
PUBLIC BUSINESS		Mr Runciman	1555	Mr Turnbull	1567
Conservation authorities, private		Folklore festival		Mr Pouliot	1568
member's notice of motion number 14		Mr Gary Wilson	1555	Municipal planning	
Mr Murdoch	1533, 1542			Mr Duignan	1568
Mr Wood	1534			Mr Philip	1568
Mr Bradley	1535				
Mr McLean	1536	STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY			
Mr Bisson	1537	AND RESPONSES			
Mr Offer	1539	Compensation for wrongful		PETITIONS	
Mr Jordan	1540	conviction		Public services	
Mr Arnott	1541	Mrs Boyd	1555	Mrs Fawcett	1569
International trade, private member's		Mr Murphy	1556		
notice of motion number 15		Mr Callahan	1557	FIRST READINGS	
Mrs MacKinnon	1543, 1551	Mr Harnick	1557	Legislative Assembly Retirement	
Mr Kwinter	1544			Allowances Amendment Act, 1993,	
Mr Carr	1546			Bill 53	
Mr Winninger	1546	ORAL QUESTIONS		Mr Kormos	1569
Ms Carter	1547	Unemployment		Budget Referendum Act, 1993, Bill 54	
Mr Turnbull	1548	Mr Phillips	1558	Mr Harris	1569
Mr Bisson	1549	Mr Rae	1558		
Mr Bradley	1550	Social contract		SECOND READINGS	
Mr Marchese	1550	Mr Mahoney	1560	Social Contract Act, 1993, Bill 48	
		Mr Rae	1560	Mr Laughren	1570, 1573
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS		Tax increases		Mr Sorbara	1571
Toronto Maple Leafs		Mr Harris	1561	Mr Curling	1572
Mr Murphy	1553	Mr Rae	1561	Mrs Sullivan	1572
Mr Arnott	1553	Public opinion polls		Mr Mahoney	1573, 1590
Mr North	1554	Mr Bradley	1564	Mr Cousens	1588
Social contract		Mr Charlton	1564	Mr Hope	1589
Mr Rizzo	1553	Ontario Film Review Board		Mr Callahan	1589
Mrs Caplan	1554	Mrs Marland	1565	Mr Stockwell	1589
Health cards		Ms Churley	1565, 1567		
Mr Morin	1553	Ms Poole	1566	OTHER BUSINESS	
Avalon Retirement Lodge		Arts and cultural funding		Withdrawal of bill	
Mr Tilson	1554	Mr Abel	1566	The Speaker	1558
		Ms Swarbrick	1566	Errata	1590

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Jeudi 17 juin 1993

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 1993 modifiant la Loi sur	
les allocations de retraite des	
députés à l'Assemblée législative,	
projet de loi 53	
M. Kormos	1569
Loi de 1993 sur les référendums	
portant sur les budgets, projet	
de loi 54	
M. Harris	1569

CA204
71
-073

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Speaker
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Clerk
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Thursday 17 June 1993

Report continued from volume A.

1710

SOCIAL CONTRACT ACT

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONTRAT SOCIAL

Continuation of debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 48, An Act to encourage negotiated settlements in the public sector to preserve jobs and services while managing reductions in expenditures and to provide for certain matters related to the Government's expenditure reduction program / Loi visant à favoriser la négociation d'accords dans le secteur public de façon à protéger les emplois et les services tout en réduisant les dépenses et traitant de certaines questions relatives au programme de réduction des dépenses du gouvernement.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): I feel compelled to participate in this debate on Bill 48, and it's a very significant piece of legislation. It's unfortunate that we've reached the point in the province of Ontario where we're dealing with so many large problems and such a short time to deal with them.

Now that the government has recognized the nature of the crisis that we're in and is dealing with it in the way it is, I have to go on record in explaining our position as a party and concur with the statement made earlier by the member for Etobicoke West, that as painful as it is, the nature of this legislation is such that our caucus will consider and will vote in favour on the second reading of this bill, but without tying ourselves to what we're going to do on third reading by virtue of the recommendations and amendments that we have to make to the bill.

Inasmuch as second reading debate is something where we're dealing with the intentions of the bill and that it can change significantly and to a degree that can satisfy our concerns by the time we get to third reading, there may well be a number of amendments that are accepted by the government that we would present in committee of the whole or in any other forum that is allowed, and at that time we would be able to look at our position for third reading.

So I want to make it very clear that our caucus is not pleased with many, many aspects of this bill and in offering our support to the bill, we are being very reluctant and very careful in that we are not in any way trying to construe by that support that we are totally supportive of all the initiatives that the bill includes or all the initiatives that Mr Rae and his government have been pursuing over the last several months in the social contract discussions.

I'd like to go back just in part, because when the government brought forward its proposal, there were

really three parts to it. The first part was the expenditure control plan, wherein the government was trying to cut from the \$17-billion proposed deficit some \$2.4 billion. A series of cuts were being suggested by the government, many of them painful and many of them wrong, yet the government, in coming forward with at least an effort to cut back government spending, as painful as it is, throughout the system and as painful as it is for some of the programs—I know the agricultural community is reeling at the fact that two of the agricultural colleges are being removed—It cuts across the service levels of the province and yet there has to be enough fat within such a large budget that we should be able to find \$2.4 billion. So we're on record as supporting the effort by the government to reduce the spending of government by that amount.

When the government also announced the beginning of the social contract talks, as the spokesperson for our party I also said we would support the intentions behind the social contract discussions, with the hope that those discussions could lead to some kind of mutually beneficial arrangement in which the government would find another \$2 billion.

I made it very clear as well at that time that this is really one step forward. If the government is able to find over \$4 billion through these processes, that is indeed a significant step forward from a government which, since it's been in office, has been so busy spending money.

I also made it very clear—and I think this has been lost by many people—that when you consider that the government's three-pronged approach to its deficit and spending has to do with the first two I just mentioned, the expenditure control plan and the social contract, and the third part is the increases in taxes, I want to make it emphatically clear that our leader, Mr Harris, the member for Nipissing, and our caucus are 100% united in fighting this government on its excessive \$2-billion tax increases. There is just nothing that can hold back our sense of anger and frustration at the government's efforts to increase the size of its coffers at the expense of everybody in this province.

It's the most offensive budget since we've seen Bob Nixon in power. There isn't any doubt that this government is now at the point where it's driven people to the tax wall. We're seeing an increase in the underground economy at every level, where people are now trying to do what they can to escape paying provincial sales tax and GST. You're seeing bootlegging, booze coming in from the States. Manufacturing places in the States are now in the process of manufacturing spirits and importing them across the border in bottles, using all the symbols on them that would make them look as if they

were Canadian-made products and sold through one of the distribution outlets in Ontario.

The underground economy is thriving in this province, and one of the reasons it's thriving is that people can no longer afford to pay the high level of tax. In order to escape that tax you're finding the barter system in place, where one person will provide a service to another without there being any kind of receipt or paperwork. You're seeing so many businesses that are offering services where, if you pay cash in that case, then you get a reduced amount, and more than just the amount that would have the provincial sales tax and the GST. It's a reduced amount far in excess of that, because it's obvious that the people are not going to be putting those costs on their tax form.

But this government doesn't understand the balance that has to take place with an economy that's going to be strong and vibrant. What this government has done is now raise the level of taxes to such a high level that we're one of the highest-taxed jurisdictions in North America, if not the world. That, in itself, is an offence of great order inasmuch as it's now discouraging outside investors from coming into our province, it's discouraging people from creating more jobs and it's taking money out of the marketplace to create those jobs. The fact is that for every \$40,000 in additional taxes, it is the loss of one more job in the marketplace. It means you as a government have lost some 50,000 jobs through this \$2-billion tax hike.

The economy was beginning to come back. Through the budget that this government has brought in, the economy has been set back to some degree.

Our purpose today in dealing with the government's financial affairs is to deal in particular with the social contract, which is what the subject of Bill 48 is all about.

Just before I comment further on that, the rudeness of the government offends me greatly. In fact, our caucus a few weeks ago raised a furore in this House when we brought to the attention of the Speaker and the government that only two days had been spent on budget debate. We've spent longer on the Sunday shopping debate, we've spent longer on other issues and yet only two days on the most significant subject that faces the province of Ontario.

1720

There are only a few members from our caucus who have had an opportunity to speak on the budget speech. It's a traditional speech. In the past there's always been, in my recollection for the 12 years that I've been in this House, at least five days spent in debating the budget. It allows people from all sections of the House to put on the record concerns they have with regard to the economy of the province and the government's spending patterns. That has not happened. In this House, the government House leader assured us, our House leader

and our leader that there would indeed be more time for a budget debate. That has not happened.

I draw that to the attention of the Speaker, who has no control over what the government's going to do, but it is all part and parcel of our having rights in opposition to be able to debate, hopefully intelligently, the issues that are before the House. What the government is now doing is tabling legislation, tabling its matters sometimes outside the House, but when it does, it's not giving us an opportunity to reflect on it publicly and openly.

Now we're into a situation where the province's economy is in tatters. There isn't anyone, I hope, who doesn't understand how grave the problem is in this province today. We're living beyond our means. When you have deficits that are projected as large as they are—it wasn't that long ago that a \$10-billion deficit was seen to be grossly high, absolutely enough to cause people to say, "How can you ever spend beyond your means like that?" Yet the Bob Rae government brought in a deficit of over \$10 billion and also a tax increase a couple of years ago. Now, again, it's as if they've reached another state of understanding things. They say: "Oh, well, we're going to have a \$17-billion deficit all in one fell swoop. We've got to do something to cut back." But they're also increasing the taxes at the same time.

I just have to say that the government's brought on a large part of the problem itself. In their first year of government, Mr Rae and his socialists felt they could spend their way out of the recession, and they couldn't. Some people may have forgotten, but the salary line on all the public service in the province of Ontario during the 1990-91 year—that's the 1990-91 fiscal year—the cost of salaries in the whole public service in Ontario went up by 16%. It was an over 16% increase on the salary line, in part because of the pay equity legislation the Liberals had brought in before them, but also in part because of the 6% and 7% increases through salary agreements that were being brought in by the government at the time. Very, very generous settlements were being offered, far in excess of inflation, and that exacerbated the already very serious problem of spending beyond our means.

The fact that senior public servants received increases in their personal wage package, benefits and so on, in excess of 16% during that first fiscal year of the Bob Rae government is another example of a government that had no understanding of the costs of running this. It seemed to them as if it was a bottomless well in which there was going to be more and more money to pay for ongoing programs and services and people and everything else. So what was perpetuated during that period of time is something of the Liberal philosophy of tax and spend. You tax it and then you spend it right back. But there wasn't any sense of putting the moneys away for another day.

Now we're at the point where we're looking at a very important piece of legislation, very divisive for the New Democrats. There are a number of their members already on public record who are going to oppose this bill. After this weekend, when the New Democratic council meets, maybe even more members of the New Democratic caucus will be having second thoughts on whether or not they will support Bill 48.

If they withdraw that support, the support of the government could be reduced to such a level that without the support of our party this bill may not pass. What I am saying is that our party will support, at least on second reading, what happens with the bill. What we do on third reading we are holding in reserve, depending on the consideration that is given by this government on our amendments that we're going to be putting forward.

I think I should mention this, because many people may not realize that if this bill fails, if it does not pass in the House, it is not a confidence motion that would cause the government to fall. My understanding is that should the government fail to pass Bill 48, for whatever reason, it would mean that the social contract legislation would not proceed but that the government does not fall at that time.

There are only special bills in which it's declared as a confidence motion. If Mr Rae or his cabinet, Mr Laughren or another spokesperson, were to say that this is a confidence bill, in that case this would become all the more important. It is important legislation, but the government will not necessarily fall should the legislation not pass.

Notwithstanding that, the New Democratic Party's failed social contract process has now spawned a complex and confusing bill in which the government offers the public sector and the public workers the worst of all options in an effort to salvage its deficit-reduction scheme. The NDP social contract act will deliver short-term pain but will make it more difficult to achieve permanent reductions in the size and cost of the public sector.

There are a number of elements in the bill: The job security clause under which every worker affected by the abolition of their position would have priority for another job with the same public sector employer or with employers in the same industry or within the same region. It also has a \$300-million, three-year fund to top up laid-off workers' UI benefits to 95% of their take-home pay for a one-year period or to be used to extend their notice periods. It also includes labour participation on a capital partnership board. It includes a deferment of all wage and merit increases until April 1, 1996, some three years from now.

It also has worker involvement in eliminating waste, with half the savings to be applied to the reduction target for the sector where the saving was realized or

where waste was eliminated, and the other half can be retained by the employer. It's a system also of unpaid leaves of absence administered to protect services. It also has an exemption for employees making less than \$30,000 a year. A number of those elements I will expand upon in greater detail.

What I really see this bill doing is providing the government with a stick, thinly disguised as a carrot, and a bigger stick in the form of a legislated wage freeze, and a bigger stick in the form of unpaid leave and layoffs to use in its effort to reduce some \$2 billion a year in each of the next three years from the broader public service compensation costs.

The bill goes on to cut transfer payments as of July 1, 1993, and sets August 1, 1993, some six weeks from the date of the introduction of the bill, as the deadline for sector and local negotiations in which parties are to negotiate cost savings equal to the reductions in the transfer payment for their respective sectors, a very, very short time frame in which they're expecting an awful lot to happen; a worrisome, short time frame.

What happens then is that those who are able to come to a satisfactory conclusion in that time who are non-union members are able to protect themselves. If they are non-union and they do not have a settlement by August 1, then they are going to be treated differently than union members within the broader public service.

There are more elements within the bill. I have a copy of the bill and I've gone through it. It takes a lot of reading. As the public knows, when lawyers get to work to put an act together, they try to cover everything they possibly can. I often chuckle when I think of it. In Canada we have four times the number of lawyers they have in Japan, and I'm sure most of them are working around Queen's Park half the time to try to make things a little bit more complicated for us who are not lawyers. Anyway, it just guarantees their continuing existence and their continuing work over the next three years, when there will be other forms of cutbacks.

1730

May I just say, as I've gone through the bill, it's got a lot of words in it that are surprisingly different from what you'd normally have in very strong legislation. At the very preamble in the bill, it says, "In order to achieve significant savings in public sector expenditures in a fair and equitable manner." Boy oh boy, I venture to say that anyone who is operating with the kind of stick-or-carrot approach the government has and using its power as it is and doing the things it is within the bill—to say that this is fairness and equity is a definition that's only being applied by the government.

For anyone else to believe the words that are being presented by the government when it says, "Oh, we're being fair and equitable," just stop and ask some questions. Don't believe all that the government is saying in its press relations program, because the

government goes on, and in the whole preamble it starts saying there's going to be "Job security including redeployment and training and adjustment for employees."

Job security, I hope, for some, but there's going to be job insecurity for many, because what's going to happen as they pass-through from the province, when the province ceases to pay the unconditional grants to municipalities, school boards, hospitals and all the other sectors that are involved, there are going to be ways in which those jurisdictions have to find the money. If they don't find the money—if they can't, never mind if they don't—through days off alone or in a review of their own programs, there will be layoffs. There will be layoffs across the broader public sector in the province of Ontario. That's why so much of the bill has to do with the \$300-million adjustment fund to help those people who are laid off, those people who are going to have their unemployment benefits pumped up to a level of 95% of their salary for up to a year after they are laid off.

So for the government to say you're going to have job security is not very accurate in describing the kind of insecurity that the people in the public service are going through now. They're tremendously insecure. In fact, one of the real benefits for people who in the past have worked in the public sector is that they've had that sense that they do a good job, and as one who has dealt over a longer period of time than some, I suppose, with the public sector at the municipal and school and at every level, I have largely been impressed by the quality of service, by the dedication they put in.

I know those exceptions stand out, where someone says, "Oh, they just go and read a book," and there are other things. Yes, I know there needs to be more efficiency and I know we can downsize the broader public service; I know we can bring that about. But to come along in the bill and say job security is there is a myth, and in fact does not reflect what is going to happen as this bill is implemented.

The empty words in this bill in the preamble, that there is "encouragement of efficiency and productivity savings in the public sector," I will touch upon that later in some of the amendments that our caucus is bringing forward, but you can't just say "encouragement of efficiency." There has to be protection for the public employees who are coming forward with suggestions. There still hasn't been any whistle-blower legislation brought forward by this government, even though it promised to in its first speech from the throne.

I don't know whether there's a ruling that's been made by the federal government on this yet, but I've never thought it possible in the past that anyone could add to the unemployment fund to give people an extra bonus in addition to unemployment insurance unless you get a special ruling from the federal government to

make that possible. I don't know whether the government has that approval yet, whether it is within the law for it to say it is going to supplement unemployment insurance to 95% of one's salary if in fact the federal government says, "No, you can't." So this bill may be fraught with problems just on that element alone.

There are a number of parts of the bill that I would like to just touch on before I go into some of the other points I'm going to raise. First of all, the powers of the minister: The powers of the minister are unreal. It gives tremendous flexibility to the Minister of Finance to do whatever is decided to be in his best interests, and those best interests may not be in the best interests of the province, inasmuch as so much will reside upon him.

This goes into part IV, subsection 11(3): "The minister shall not designate a plan as the sectoral framework unless, in the opinion of the minister, the plan meets the following criteria." Then it starts outlining the criteria of those who will be included in the sector, and these are the kind of weasel words in the legislation: If "there is sufficient support for the plan," in other words, the plan the unions are discussing with their membership, if he says, "Oh, well, there's sufficient support there," what's sufficient? Is it over 50% or is it over 5% or is it because he knows a few people there and he wants to have a success story to say that government's succeeding in its proposals? He then can arbitrarily, unilaterally decide yes, there's sufficient support there.

It's almost like Mr Rae when he answered the questions of our leader in the House today. It's as if we're dumb and he's smart. Everything is going to be residing in the mind of the minister rather than in the form of some tribunal or some group independent of the socialist philosophy that is so much a part of this government.

The test on the power of the minister to see that this bill is implemented fairly across all the sector is very subjective, subjective on the part of the minister. Who knows what guidelines and what criteria he will be using at that time?

It goes on to say that if it meets the criteria, if "the plan contains appropriate"—"appropriate," that's the word—"appropriate provisions to minimize job losses in the sector," and then again it uses that magic word, "provisions respecting the redeployment of employees in the sector who are released from employment."

That's what's happening. We're moving so quickly on this panic program the Rae government has presented that a tremendous amount of freedom will lie in the hands of that Minister of Finance to play his game.

I am concerned as well with how the plan has certain effects—and this comes into the same section under the framework for the plan—on those who are earning less than \$30,000 a year. What it says is that there is no

limit to the amount of overtime they can claim. So if you're making \$30,000 a year and a municipality is saying, "Look, we've had so many people off with another section of the bill, their 12 days off, that we can give you overtime," there could well be another whole series of expenditures for all the people who are having to work overtime under the \$30,000 bracket because their limit of \$30,000 doesn't include overtime pay. Therefore, municipal councils that want to do an end run on the legislation could say, "In order to satisfy what we have to do, you're under \$30,000; we're going to give you overtime to solve the problem for us so that we can keep certain services going."

It goes on to explain the powers and then there's one caveat clause: "Subsection (3) does not apply to a plan if, in the opinion of the minister, special circumstances apply and it is desirable to designate the plan as a sectoral framework." So the minister again has more freedom to do anything he wants to do. It's quite amazing, the powers that fall in his hands.

There's one other section, and I'm surprised the unionists in the New Democratic Party are supporting section 22, where it says, "The provisions of a non-bargaining unit plan prevail over any provision in any other act or the regulations thereunder that relates to holidays, vacations, hours...." It just says the total power that is now given to the government in Bill 48 breaks all the other laws. This now becomes the law as it affects negotiations and agreements with people. I would suggest that anyone who has any kind of agreement as an employee within the public sector come back and really understand what Mr Rae's government is trying to do to them by breaking all historic agreements that have existed before.

1740

I also suggest that anyone who is a non-union member of any bargaining unit understand that your rights are different from union members. That's always been so, but I just want you to know that this government has said, "A non-bargaining unit employee has no right to grieve under the Public Service Act or any other act in respect of actions taken by his or her employer in accordance with a non-bargaining unit plan." Again, their rights as individuals are taken away.

It's probably under those particular sections that the unions are going to take this to the courts, so the bill, if passed, could well end up in the courts and be found to be against the Constitution of Canada, because it's taking away the rights of individuals. That becomes another whole issue, and again, the lawyers will prosper on that one.

I want to touch on the bill itself, because you have to read it to believe it, that in fact a socialist government is bringing it forward.

When they're talking about where there's no agreement or plan, it really gets complicated. This part does

not apply to "employees who work full time and who earn less than \$30,000 annually, excluding overtime pay, or employees who work part-time if their full-time equivalent earnings would be less than \$30,000 annually." In other words, you could be working part-time right up to \$30,000 and then go and get some extra money out of them as well. So there are all kinds of exclusion clauses within the bill that cause people, I think, some concern when they start looking at it.

The other thing is that we'll have to look at the catch-up at the end of the bill, on March 31, 1996, when everything's over, according to this bill, and some other government will be in power. I'd be willing to make a very safe bet with anyone who wants it that this government won't be around in 1996. I'm not usually a gambling person, but anyone who wants to take a bet on that—I'm not sure whether it will be the Conservatives in power, I hope it is, but it sure won't be the New Democrats.

What happens is that at the end of this bill, of the time of its implementation, we start getting all the kick-ins of all the pent-up costs that have accumulated during that period of time.

What will happen is that those employees who are too valuable to the job—I'm coming to a section in the bill where it describes who they are, a person who performs critical functions, section 26. People who perform critical functions, who can't take the 12 mandatory days off that their employer wants them to take off, can accumulate those 12 days off to the end of the three years and then apply for compensation for them. Then you're going to have a bump at the end of the three years from those who have gone ahead and had to do something during this period of time. In other words, this is going to provide a small valley in the meantime, but in the long term we're going to be back where we were.

The government has to understand what we all learned after Pierre Elliott Trudeau brought in wage and price controls. Talk to the economists, talk to the people who remember the 1970s and they will tell you that immediately after they were over, there was a catch-up that immediately started to take place.

This bill will force catch-up to start being the curse of 1996, because at that time everyone who has had some kind of suffering, a lot of suffering between now and then, will say: "It's time to catch up. We've got a pent-up demand for more money. We are owed more." The negotiations are going to be terrible. They were at the end of the wage and price controls of Pierre Elliott Trudeau; they will be on the wage control package of the Ontario government known as Bill 48.

It goes on all through the bill. It isn't just in one clause where the powers are given to the minister, "The minister may make necessary adjustments to the periods set out." Again, all kinds of opportunity for the minister

to massage the bill and make the changes he wants.

I'm concerned as well with subsection 25(4) of the bill. If people want to know where the money is coming from for the \$300 million or \$500 million that's going to be in the compensation fund, this is the section that I think helps get the government its money. This is the area where they're going to have it. Maybe the New Democrats—no, I'm not going to say how many of them have read the bill. It doesn't really matter. The fact is that Bob Rae and Floyd Laughren, the Premier and the Minister of Finance, are proceeding with it anyway.

What you'd better understand is that any employee who is forced to take time off because of the 12 days will continue to pay for his pension for those days, while they're off, and so will the employer, so there isn't any full stop to the cost of all the employee benefits. The pension part continues to go in the big pot, which could well amount to \$500 million over the next three years, and the government may well be funding its special fund for employment loss.

I just quote, "...an employer's or employee's obligation to contribute to a pension plan and an employee's entitlement under a pension plan are not affected by any reduction in earnings that results from the employee taking unpaid leaves of absence under," from another section of the bill. So there it is. Again, they've got their bases covered.

I want to understand and I don't think we will till we get to committee, but there's another subsection here, "If an employee performs critical functions as prescribed by regulation and the employer is unable" to do the job for whatever reason, they may be required to take special leave. I want to know, and I will need to know by the government, who it would define as those who would perform critical functions. You see, it leaves so much room for individual decisions and judgements to be made by the government that it's open to question as to what that will be.

All kinds of things that happen—I am concerned at the accumulation that goes on with this bill because those persons who perform critical functions could be a fireperson, could be a policeperson, could be a chief administrative officer in a jurisdiction, could be the person who keeps the waterworks going so that people can have running water in their homes. Any of those people who cannot, for reasons of the critical function they're performing, may carry forward those 12 days off to future years, including after March 31, 1996. Wow, there it is. Back to the future is where that one goes.

Other parts of the bill: The bill will give unbelievable powers to cabinet. It goes down to clause (m), so how many that is—all the definitions, all the regulations, all the powers of the government. This Legislature is going to give to Mr Laughren, the Treasurer, the Minister of Finance, unbelievable powers under section 41 of the bill. So there it is.

It's a bill that has an intention to save \$2 billion. That's the intention I support. The way the government is going about it is what creates incredible concerns to my leader, Mr Harris, and our caucus. We have suggested a number of amendments and I will be bringing them forward in detail as we discuss this bill in committee.

First of all, the government should institute a three-year hiring freeze, which has the potential, over a period of three years, of reducing the number of public servants by over 50,000 people, and by the end of that period of time, our reckoning is that it will be saving over \$2 billion a year by the third year.

I realize that part of the problem is that it doesn't have the short-term quick fix that is part and parcel of the New Democrats' approach in this bill, but it has a long-term implication that will cause the government to reorganize and restructure itself.

I'm honorary chairman of the York Technology Association, a high-technology group of companies, and I'm seeing corporations, the very large computer companies, over the last number of years having to do business differently, where they've downsized. We use these terms so nicely, it's almost as if, when you're dealing with death, you don't say that someone died; you say they passed away.

We've developed these soft terms to make it sound as if you're being nice. Death is death and layoffs are layoffs. Losing your job is a serious problem and the whole problem of forced downsizing is just another way of saying layoffs, and it's problems and hurt to those people who lose their jobs.

1750

Our presentation says, "Let's try to do"—and it's going to be hard to do it. I really appreciated the way that my leader today tried to say there's nothing easy about our approach either. We're not trying to be simplistic in saying what we are. But we're saying that if we, through attrition, allow the government to become smaller, then over a period of time there will have to be a restructuring and reorganization of departments and services within government, because there'll be tradeoffs going on, knowing that you can't come along, unless it's a very essential service—and some of those will have to be filled. But there will have to be a downsizing and reorganizing of government that begins to make the government more efficient with fewer people.

That is what has happened in the private sector over the last number of years. A significant amount is happening with fewer people, because with fewer people through attrition, you're able to, hopefully, keep a level of service up. People will work harder, people will do more, people will have to be more flexible. You're talking, as Drucker talks, about the post-capitalist society. New guidelines and rules will come into force.

People will not have some of the freedoms and luxuries they've had before, because there'll be more pressure on the public service.

I have seen that pressure in the private sector, where the private sector, over the last number of years, has been under a heavy load to do more with less. One of our sincere requests of the government is to look at having a hiring freeze. That becomes one of the issues.

The other thing is a public sector freeze. We've said this for ages. It goes back into a very excellent document that our caucus put together. In 1991, the Ontario caucus put together A Blueprint for Economic Renewal and Prosperity in Ontario. One of the key issues that we had within this document, going back a couple of years ago, has to do with expenditure controls to cut and redirect government spending. We go into these whole issues where we want to control the costs of government. We've been saying it. We believe it. We know it can happen.

I know that in my first few years in the Legislature—Mr Davis was still Premier at the time—there was a tremendous effort to bring the size of government down through attrition. Painful as it was, it was happening, because during the four-year period I was here, approximately 7,000 fewer jobs were available in the province of Ontario. Slowly but surely—through attrition, not through job loss—the government service was being fine-tuned, forced to do more.

I'm saying in this one that there be a sector wage freeze and that all sectors have an immediate freeze on the anniversary of all contracts and may it continue for a three-year period from that date, so that at some point everyone in their contract with the province of Ontario will have a wage freeze for three years.

The third thing we would do—and I brought this in the House back a few weeks ago and asked the Minister of Finance to look at it—is whistle-blower provisions to protect public servants who report fraud, waste or other abuses. Those who report some fraud or some problem in the Legislature would be protected and would not lose their jobs, would not be punished. There would be legislation to protect those people who have a chance to help improve government.

The government promised in the first speech from the throne that there would be whistle-blower legislation. It has not come. I know for a fact that there are public servants who are reluctant to come forward with their suggestions for fear of reprisals against them.

The fourth point that we would do is stop the year-end burnoff. Our critic for Housing, the member for Mississauga South, and the leader have found in Ministry of Housing directives a directive that went out from a senior official in the Ministry of Housing advising the Housing offices across the province to spend their money before year-end. That's the kind of thing I just

can't believe is still being countenanced and supported. The government has not stopped that logic, even within its own government. It has to stop it. Each ministry, each department, every unit should be finding ways of saving money for the year-end.

Another suggestion which is unique to the New Democrats, but not to us, is that there be performance bonuses for public servants based on efficiencies and productivity gains, similar to the private sector agreements, such as those involving the Canadian Auto Workers union, so that there are ways in which people who are serving the public can benefit from positive good suggestions of things they can do to make it a better place.

And then, this is one of those simple things, but that there be an establishment of an expenditure review committee to identify non-productive government programs and to prioritize existing programs. It's a program review, and it allows, for those areas in which there are continuing costs, continuing spending, that there is a way in which a forum is reviewing them and causing them to be re-investigated. It's in such a way that you have sunset clauses. We don't have enough sunset clauses. Everything the government introduces just seems to go on and on and on.

We're saying there has to be a time when everything is brought into a review and you say, "Do I continue to want to spend this money?"

People do it in their own homes. We're forced into it, because all of us, at least my friends and myself—I'm making less money this year than I did last year and the year before. In fact I'm going back into my own home and my own lifestyle and reviewing our spending patterns as a family so that we're able to continue to do the important things and we're then able to identify those things that may not be as important that we're able to save some dollars on. That is all part of what government has to do, that there be an expenditure review committee that allows government to have a real review of what its costs are.

I've gone through the bill, and there are a number of things that are sincerely problematic for me on it. Some I've touched on, but I have them now in order and I have 10 points that I wanted to raise that are problems to this bill.

The first is, understand, ladies and gentlemen of the House and of the province of Ontario, by the province bringing into this bill—one key ingredient is that people over \$30,000 a year may be required to take 12 days off. So for the next three years, those over \$30,000 a year with 12 days off means that there's close to a 5% saving in the salary line, which is the number the government's looking for in the social contract negotiations. If you're able to save 5% through the 900,000-plus public servants, 5% of their salaries will amount to the \$2 billion.

And what happens at the end of the three years? Everyone's back where they were before. We're right back where we started from. So to have days off as a way of finding the 5% is a short-term solution. It's a panic-driven solution. It's a solution that gives us the problem three years from now.

Why can't Mr Rae and his ilk understand that it isn't a long-term solution he's coming up with? Come forward with something that has a long-term strategy to it, rather than what they're proposing with this. By deferring the problem to three years from now, you're leaving it for someone else to deal with, because that is going to be the consequence of saying, "You got 12 days off this year, 12 next, 12—" Then it all starts back and we're nowhere better off then than we are today. Plus on top of that you're going to have the pent-up demand for more money, more return, more everything. So I'm saying the first problem to this bill is you're deferring the problem of today to three years from now.

The second one is, this government is deferring the problem of looking at the bigger issues. The government is not having a program review. They have not begun a program review of any of the things. They are not having a review of the major crown corporations. They are not looking at privatization. I mean, how many times have they sold the SkyDome? I'm not sure. What they have to do is start saying: "What are we really going to do to get some money here? How can we approach the larger issue in a responsible way, without selling off all our assets either?"

1800

What I want to see them do, if you have a bigger view, is see how you can bring some of the entrepreneurial spirit into the way government is run.

There was a presentation today by the mayor of Pickering. The member for Durham West wasn't at most of the presentation, but it was by PACT, Pickering Ajax Citizens Together, and the mayor and others from Pickering, who were saying how upset they are with the Interim Waste Authority and its failure to come up with a proposal that's reasonable and responsible for a landfill site in Durham; they're really upset by it.

To my surprise—well, not really, but to my joy—they're saying, "Why doesn't the government look at the private sector to try to help the government solve the problem of garbage?" That was one of the key points they were trying to make, because they are saying the present Interim Waste Authority is costing some \$27 million already. It's going to cost more because of the approach they're taking, lots, lots more, because it turns out that the sites they're identifying—I'm getting off on a tangent—are so bad. The sites they're choosing in Markham and Vaughan are on aquifers and on sand, and it's going to require a double-size liner. The clay alone could cost in the order of \$130 million.

But there's no review. Once the government passed Bill 143 and brought in that legislation, no review, no consideration, no answer to our questions about the cost of the thing. They've made political decisions rather than technical decisions, so we were saying, look at the bigger issue.

Look at the bigger issue, and when you're looking at Bill 48, the big issue here is to know the whole cost of the whole project, and if there are ways of saving money, find them. They're my dollars, the taxpayers' dollars, and we don't want you to come along and say, "Because we made that decision two years ago, it's okay for ever and ever." It isn't. Everything we do should be up for review and consideration and rethinking. Take the big picture.

The third point, and I've touched on it earlier, is the unusual authority of the minister in this bill. I just don't trust him. I don't trust giving all this power to Pink Floyd, or Pink Slip Floyd or whatever we call the honourable Treasurer.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Please refer to the honourable member by his riding or his title within the government.

Mr Cousens: I didn't know you were listening, Mr Speaker, but now I see you are, and I shouldn't really refer to our Treasurer in that way.

I want to quote Robert Sheppard, in the *Globe and Mail* on June 16, because it's not just me thinking this. Mr Sheppard often has some good thoughts to share, and this has to do with the unusual authority of the minister.

"If the bill becomes law, Bob Rae's government will become chief, judge and lord high executioner of all matters pertaining to wages and benefits in the broad public sector (a group containing nearly one million people) for at least three years."

The big Pooh-Bah is going to be the honourable Treasurer. So one person, set up in a way that no one else has ever been, with such unprecedented powers, becomes judge, jury, referee and executioner; that's what he is. And if you want to allow him to have such unbelievable, unprecedented control, then I say: "No, don't give it to him. Restrict him; control him; put some ties and controls around him."

So get ready. We will be bringing a few amendments in that regard, because part of what can happen is that the Treasurer, by having such unbelievable control, can do whatever he wants. He can invoke provisions or he can revoke them. It can be a love-in with the unions. When you know how the NDP has been traditionally supported by at least the union heads—not necessarily by the union members; I'm very pleased to say that I have found quite a large number of people who are members of the different unions who have supported our party and I hope will continue to. What will happen is

that Mr Laughren, in this love-in that could take place, could have spitting one moment and scratching their back the next, and I'm just concerned that he won't know when to spit and when to scratch. So rather than allow him to have all that power, let's make sure we restrict him a little so there is a sense that the NDP isn't going to give it all away.

There it is. I think there's a serious problem with this bill. It's flawed by giving such unprecedented control to one person. It's a dictatorship already in the province. It's a one-party government. Ever since Bob Rae came to the province of Ontario, we have seen what it's like. He says one thing before he's elected and another thing after he's elected. So with this bill, who knows what they're going to do after the bill is passed? I can't trust them. One day they say they're opposed to Sunday shopping, then they're in favour of it. One day they're opposed to casinos, now they're in favour. One day they're opposed to auto insurance and now—who's going to trust these politicians called NDP? I don't.

The other thing that worries me is the catch-up. It's really a problem for municipalities on the whole business of just getting caught up with what this bill is all about. They're halfway through the year. They've done their budgets and they've put out their tax bills. How are they going to accomplish all that has to be done within such a short time frame? That is a problem. It's not just the municipalities, it's every part of the public sector: school boards, hospitals, Hydro, I don't care who it is. They have such a problem to try to deal with in this next period of time.

My fifth point concern about this bill is, how many people are going to be laid off? I'd like the Treasurer to answer that question. Municipalities will have to make decisions about: Are they going to have rollbacks in salary or are they going to have layoffs? How are they going to access the fund to help with those layoffs? Will Metro be able to access the fund? Will all the different groups be able to access it? Will it be enough to help them do it?

The fact is that there are going to be layoffs with this government approach. That is not our approach. The approach presented by Mr Harris and the Conservative caucus, unlike the Liberals who don't have an approach, is to say, "Let there be a wage freeze for three years and let there be a hiring freeze for three years, and in that way we can begin to see something." We're going to see layoffs, and when people are laid off they have a year's protection, but what happens after that year?

I have friends who have lost their jobs for a number of reasons; the private sector has been devastated over the last number of years. We just saw how one of the major companies in Canada—is able to do it in a softer way, but another 1,000 people are being laid off, largely affecting my riding. They will have some programs to help move people who have a number of years' service;

none the less, they're young, vibrant, good people ready to work, yet the likelihood of finding a job is very, very small.

So how many are going to be laid off? Does the government have any idea? I don't think they do. I don't think I do. I don't know, but I want to ask the question and I'd like to see if the government could give us some answers.

My sixth point of concern about this bill is that there is no equity for municipalities that have been doing their job. I look at my municipality, and I'm especially proud to represent the riding of Markham; it's a great community and they're wonderful people. What we've seen in the last number of years is a municipal council, especially last year, that went to work and tried to reduce its spending and become more efficient. They downsized the number of people working for the municipality; they had a 2.5% decrease in their spending last year. In fact, when they did their budget this year, they reduced their budget again by another 8.5%, so they're spending less in 1993 than they did in 1991. It's hard to do, because so much of that has to do with salaries, people and services, yet they have downsized. They have downsized over the last number of years and have been responsible in trying to trim their costs.

Other municipalities haven't done as well. In Toronto last year, there was a 4.5% increase in its budget and they gave an increase to salaries. Why would Toronto and Markham be treated the same way? If my community has been downsizing over the last number of years and has trimmed off the fat, why doesn't the government, when they're developing their equations for what's going to be cut back, have some sense to say, "You know, we should look over the last three years as to what's been happening in those communities," and have a way of rolling in the savings that those communities have had over those two or three years and then take it into the future, so you're not just saying, "As of today; it doesn't matter what you did yesterday; it doesn't matter about anything else"?

Have some sense of looking at the big picture, and when you see that picture, you'll say, "Well, then there's a way of balancing it off," and those communities that have been responsible and worked towards a reduced budget and reduced costs will not be punished the same as those that may have some more fat.

1810

The member from Mississauga was talking earlier, and his municipality has, I have been told, a surplus, a budget reserve of over \$300 million. Now, there are municipalities with that kind of reserve—I know our community doesn't—but yet we're all being treated in the same way on this one. AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, has said to look at the average over five years, to go back two years and do a three-four, have an averaging out. That way we're going

to be able to have a more fair and equitable way of dealing with all municipalities.

My seventh point: If there is no sectoral agreement, and if the minister, using all his special powers, still doesn't see a sectoral agreement appear, I'm wondering what the regulations are going to be. I really have such a great deal of uncertainty as to the effect that's going to cause. Already we know that everybody has faced a huge tax increase this year. Now we know that there's going to be a huge reduction in spending ability for almost one million people in Ontario, because they'll have at least a 5.4% cut in their salary, so 11% of their dollars are not going to be available for other kinds of spending.

What I'm saying is that this government hasn't looked at other options to see just what can be done to find the moneys rather than cause the tremendous turmoil and hardship that is coming out of this bill.

I'm not just sure what my eighth point is. All of the issues for those people who are under \$30,000, the fact that their overtime isn't covered in the bill, so they could be making up—who knows? How much overtime do some people get? Could they make \$5,000, \$10,000, \$15,000, \$20,000 in overtime? I know some employees make well over \$18,000 or \$20,000 in overtime. That could be putting them up to \$50,000, and yet overtime is not considered in this perspective, which maybe it should be.

Then what I'm concerned about is that some of the municipalities might try to do an end run around the government by using these people under the \$30,000 factor for a lot of overtime and that way do an end run around the agreements. In my community in Markham, of the 600 staff, some 500 of them are making over the \$30,000 a year, that level, so there are going to be 100 of them at \$30,000 or under. They could be doing double duty over the next period of time, when a number of others will be required to take time off.

My ninth point is the catch-up when this three-year period is over. I've mentioned already that after the wage and price controls of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, there was a catch-up time which was extremely costly to all of Canada.

My tenth point, which I've mentioned as well, is that this legislation may be unconstitutional. If it is unconstitutional, what a waste of time for all of us. But that is something that we're used to doing around here.

I'd like to, if I could, comment on some of the presentation I heard from the Liberals over the last period of time. The Liberals are really very quick to pass judgement on everyone else, but don't accept the fact that they are coauthors of the problem that we have today. Don't underestimate the legacy of problems created by David Peterson and his government on the Bob Rae government.

People are very quick to forget the very wonderful days of the 1980s, when things were prospering and business was booming. It was a great time, because there was money to spare and everything; it was tax and spend. Those were the days when Bob Nixon was able to come in with the largest budget, up until the one that we've just had, the largest tax increases of any government in the history of the province of Ontario. Yet the Liberals refuse to accept the responsibility that they should for the record that they left and for the policies they created that are in part creating the legacy of the problems that the New Democrats are fighting today.

There isn't any doubt that the business community and the public at large were frustrated with the business and fiscal approach that the Liberals perpetrated on Canada during that period of time. From what I've seen over this last period, and having been there watching the new Liberal leader at her different press conferences, the Liberals are opposed to the three parts of the government program. They're opposed to the expenditure control program, and they've got, I think, some legitimate concerns about the expenditure control, but they're opposed to the expenditure cutbacks. There's \$2.4 billion they're opposed to.

They're opposed, and they're voting, have come out on record that they are opposed to the social contract. The Liberal leader said yesterday: "The chaos surrounding the failed social contract negotiation is the result of Bob Rae's gross mismanagement, and this is a crisis of his making. Bob Rae has failed to recognize the seriousness of the financial situation."

I say that the Liberal leader has failed to also accept her responsibility as a member of the Peterson cabinet that raised so many of those taxes and created so many of the problems that we're into today, and I want to spend some time on that, because what they're so good at is criticizing all the issues. They're criticizing the expenditure control plan, they're criticizing the social contract, they're criticizing the tax, all three efforts that the government's proceeding with, yet they haven't offered a foolish anything at all as another option; nothing. They say, "Open the contracts, do a little talking, a little thinking," but the Liberals are sucking and blowing at the same time when it comes to everything they're talking about. They have lost the sense of history as to what they have done to this province. I want to remind you—

Interjections.

Mr Cousens: Hey, I woke up the Liberals. I woke them up. They're listening. Well, I don't care if you listen or not, the people out there in the province of Ontario are the ones—

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): How are you voting?

Mr Cousens: I'm voting for it, on second reading.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): And if they don't accept your amendments—

Mr Cousens: If my amendments and our amendments aren't received in the spirit in which they're offered—

Mr Mahoney: You're starting to sound like a Liberal yourself.

Mr Cousens: Well, at least I'm saying something and I'm putting it on the ground. I've got a stake in the ground. I'm prepared to fight for something. I think the people of Ontario are sick of the kinds of politics you guys have, because it's as if you can oppose everything and win everyone's vote. You've got to stand up for something. If you think you can be all things to all people, walk up and down both sides of the same street at the same time, people are sick of it. They don't want that kind of politics, and in fact, as painful as it is for me to support Bob Rae on anything—you don't know how much it hurts to want to help him right now—I'm prepared to come along and do what I believe is right, and so is our leader and so is our caucus, if it's right for Ontario. If we're in a crisis, as we believe we are, then we'd better—

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Are you going to support this?

Mr Cousens: I just said I am.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Interjections are out of order. Members will have the opportunity of participating. The member for Markham has the floor.

Mr Cousens: It's hard to control these animals, I know. Having sat in the chair for three years myself, I know how difficult it is. It doesn't stop me from making the point that the kind of politics that this province is going through isn't the kind of politics that we should have.

What happens is that the leader of the Liberal Party stands up and says, "We are going to do this," and then the whole group of them vote as one. With the New Democrats, you've got them starting to think for a change and you've got three or four or five or six breaking ranks, but the Liberals, how can you come into the House and say, "We're going to oppose everything"?

You're opposed to the budget, you're opposed to the expenditure cutbacks and you're opposed to the social contract. In other words, you don't have any options at all except oppose, and that's just a way of trying to win people's votes without saying what you stand for, because you can always side with people saying, "I disagree with this, I disagree with that," and then not come forward and do something about it.

1820

It's one thing to have all your sacred cows, but sometimes you have to give up some to save the herd,

and that's the problem with you guys. They are trying to have all things sacred, and there are times when you have to come along and do a very difficult balancing act to find a way of dealing with the bigger issue. As painful as it is, you have to come along and say: "What is the other option? What happens if Ontario continues in the plight that it is now? Can we afford to have such a high cost of bureaucracy and civil service? Is there any way in which we, as legislators, can find a way out of this problem? Are we able to contribute some amendments and solutions?"

That is the position of our caucus. As difficult as it is to support Bob Rae, we are prepared to stand up here and say that the intention of the social contract is in the right way. You've got problems with it, Bobby boy, but we're prepared to help you find a way out of it so that you can get more balance to it. I wish it had program review; I wish it had many things, but you can't just come along and constantly criticize without providing some kind of other alternative or option.

That's what the Liberals have done and consistently done. They have consistently just tried to tear everything down. I think there are times in government where this party system, as I see it now, isn't working. If we see something that's right for the House—the member for Mississauga West brought in a motion about young people buying lottery tickets. That was a time when the House came together and said, "We all agree," and the government put it through.

We've got to have more consensus on more issues so that the reasoned arguments that come forward are not just going to be decided by one or two people in caucus but by all of us in this House. Maybe the US system does have something to offer, because in Congress and in the Senate people can break party ranks more often and the government doesn't necessarily fall. This government won't fall if this bill isn't passed. The government will carry on. It is not a confidence vote on the government. It is not a confidence—

Mr Offer: Yes, it is.

Mr Cousens: You're wrong on that, Steven. It is not a confidence vote, by our understanding. If Mr Rae makes it a confidence vote, then it does become a confidence vote, but to my understanding it is not.

The Liberals have come along—and they forget that when they ran in the last election they were promising such a—I think it was going to be more than a balanced budget that year. The Liberals were talking about a \$23-million surplus in the summer of 1991. Then when the new government took over, much to the surprise of David Peterson and his company, they found that there was a \$3-billion deficit. What an arithmetic error that one was, yet that is in fact the way in which the Liberals had their mathematics. It's a convenient form of mathematics that allows them to do what they want, when they want, how they want for votes. That's really

where, when you start looking at them and you look at some of the things that John Bulloch has said from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business people, the Peterson government was the most anti-business government he'd every dealt with.

I have to say, when you start looking at it, the people in Ontario don't have long memories for the things of the past, but I think we need to look at something of the Liberal record, and I want to just put into the record a few of those golden quotes that have to do with what the Liberals said and did and the effect that it had on the public back a few years ago.

This all ties in to the fact that the problems that Mr Rae has today are not totally of his own making. As I've said earlier in this presentation, he has himself to blame for tremendous parts of the increase in costs of government. He hasn't stopped spending with the social agenda. But let's just look at a couple of quotes that go back to 1988, as it pertains to Treasurer Bob Nixon.

This is Lorrie Goldstein on April 21, from the Toronto Sun, when he says: "Bob Nixon yesterday ploughed taxpayers into the ground and then stuck it to them with a gilt-edged pitchfork...But this budget also employs the oldest political trick in the book. It sticks it to the taxpayer in the first year of a majority government in the belief that the public has a short memory. A year ago, when the Liberals had only 51 seats and a minority government, Nixon said in his pre-election budget that 'fiscal responsibility' meant no new taxes." Yes, before he was elected, remember when he was just in that marginal state, the election was coming up, he said, "No new taxes." I remember it well.

Then he goes on in this article back then, "Yesterday, with the economy still strong and the social needs precisely the same, Nixon argued 'fiscal responsibility' demanded the biggest tax grab in Ontario history," and that's what happened.

When the Liberals took power, they brought in 33 taxes during their five years in government—33 taxes—and we then moved out of the competition scale where we were ahead of Japan, Germany and other countries, where we were one of the lead provinces in Canada. But under the Liberal regime, under David Peterson and the present Liberal leader, our costs went up and up.

The Hamilton Spectator, talking on the same budget in 1988, said: "So much for David Peterson's honeymoon with Ontario voters. His high-spending Liberals said nothing about higher taxes en route to an all-too-easy majority election win last September. But the political joyride lost a lot of steam yesterday as the government made everybody pay now that it's firmly in power...The tax increases announced yesterday, and the prospect of even more if spending continues as it has, are as strong an incentive for constructive change as anything." So as soon as he came in, the Spectator was

quick to say, "Hey, they're at it with us."

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce had something to say about the Liberals. The Liberals, you see can't suck and blow. They can't fool us. The people aren't so stupid. During their tenure they raised taxes. They did it their own way and now they come along in opposition, they're mean-minded, mean-spirited, with nothing to offer except a whole 1992 bunch of garbage words, weasel words that mean nothing. So when you come along and look at the chamber of commerce in their pre-budget submission back in 1990, they said, "The Ontario government, through its"—

Interjections.

Mr Cousens: Can you control them a bit, Mr Speaker? I know they're going to be upset to have this stuff put in the record.

The Acting Speaker: I want to remind all members that the member for Markham has the floor and all members will have an opportunity to participate in questions and/or comments. If indeed they wish to participate in the debate, all they have to do is be recognized by the Chair. The member for Markham.

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): Let them suffer in silence.

Mr Cousens: I haven't heard the Minister of Labour ever say anything I agreed with till now, and his comment was valid. He said, "Let them suffer in silence," and that would be a delight.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce, in a pre-budget submission in 1990—and this had to do with David Peterson again, Bob Nixon and company said: "The Ontario government, through its actions and activities, has been a major part of the inflationary pressures that have led to the current economic slowdown. Having created the problem, this government must be part of the solution."

That's a statement of fact, because during that period of time when the government was raising the cost of doing business and losing sense, as much as Monte Kwinter would try as the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology to get some kind of support and services for the private sector, he couldn't because he wasn't as powerful as Bob Nixon and the others in that caucus.

The Toronto Star, when it was commenting on Premier Peterson—I want to just give you this quote because it tells you something else about the Liberals—said, "When Premier David Peterson was campaigning for re-election in 1987, he told Ontario motorists: 'We have'"—and this is a Liberal. Remember how he said this? So many of the New Democrats weren't around when this was said. David Peterson said: "'We have a very specific plan to lower insurance costs.'

"At the same time"—and I'm quoting from the Toronto Star—"he dismissed the opposition New

Democrats' promise of rate reductions through a public insurance plan as 'wishes and theories.'

"Peterson's plan turned out to be the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, which has the power to set premiums. But through this board, it seems that Peterson has cornered the market on 'wishes and theories' in an attempt to soothe public fears about rate increases....Peterson's plan for lower insurance rates looks more like a sham, as Conservative leader Andy Brandt says."

1830

That was another one of those classic examples where the Liberals said they had a plan, a plan for lower insurance rates, but we found out the plan actually gave us higher insurance rates. No wonder the Liberals are embarrassed by their own automobile insurance plan. They offer a plan, they promise a plan and the rates go up. That's what Liberal mathematics is all about.

I want to quote from the St Catharines Standard; it's nice to move around the province as other people were also reflecting about the Liberal legacy of the 1980s. "Through his budget Nixon is forcing taxpayers to cut their own expenditures while at the same time the government shows not the slightest willingness to control its own spending habits."

There wasn't a single moment during Peterson's reign when they cut back on spending. What examples there were: the trips to Italy, to Europe, to the Far East. There was more travelling going on, as they made up for lost time, to see the world at the expense of the taxpayers. There was an uncontrolled spending-spree in the province during the 1980s. Times were good, but the life was being taxed out of us by the Liberals at that time. We cut back on our costs while the Liberals just allowed this whole, big government to expand and grow and become something even larger than it should have been.

I'm going to the Financial Times for a quote in 1989, commenting on Mr Nixon, the Treasurer at that time.

"When Treasurer Bob Nixon tabled his recent budget, business groups denounced the Peterson government in terms normally reserved for the socialistic hordes of the New Democratic Party. John Bulloch, president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, blasted the Peterson regime as the most anti-business government he has dealt with in 20 years.

"...Peterson may dismiss business discontent over any of these issues as unwarranted....But the cumulative impression is that of an anti-business agenda."

The seeds of the destruction that are now part and parcel of the legacy of the New Democrats were planted by the Liberals, who are really socialists in another colour. What they began was this whole undermining of the confidence in the economy and in business. In fact, that was the beginning of business saying, "Do I really

want to establish my business in Ontario or should I be moving elsewhere?"

Looking at government waste, there are classic examples that go back to 1990 when the Liberals were in power. I want to quote from the Sarnia Observer, again moving across the province:

"The way in which the money," the more than \$300,000 spent by Peterson and members of his cabinet on a week-long European junket, "was spent does indicate a problem of attitude in which it appears there is very little concern about how long and hard we have to work to pay for the lavish comings and goings of our elected élite."

Remember that one, 300 grand spent in 1990 by David Peterson and his cabinet as they trooped through Europe, government waste at its best? That's one of the reasons you don't hear them commenting on government waste right now.

Our caucus is very much on the record that it's opposed, during this time of restraint, to travel outside the province of Ontario. We will do our best to control that kind of spending. Certainly Mr Peterson's government and those who travelled with him thought they were having a fun time—and they did—at our expense.

I quoted earlier from Robert Sheppard of the Globe and Mail, but, again talking about government waste, on March 28, 1990, he said:

"In Ontario, Premier David Peterson probably holds the Canadian record for advisory bodies: In the first two years of office, heading a minority government, he appointed no fewer than 51 task forces on one subject or another. He has since set up two high-profile Premier's advisory councils for technology and health care. Intellectually active, these councils generated substantial fees to various consultants, but little in the way of new legislation or even government policy."

Can you believe it? This place continues to have task forces; we've got one now on education. They're going all the time, and they bring in outsiders. Why not use the Legislature? Why not use elected members? Why not use the people we have in our caucus? My compatriots, the member from Oakville and others, are willing to serve on committees and come forward as all-party groups with recommendations and get on with it. We're elected to serve, we're elected to think, we're elected to lead, yet David Peterson—talk about waste—was really one of the arch perpetrators of waste himself.

Interjections.

Mr Cousens: It's a feeding frenzy for you, guys; I just want you to know.

I want to give another quote. The Hamilton Spectator, in May 1989, said:

"The taxes, however, need not have been so high. The government could have done more to cut its soaring

administration costs. The rent review system, for example, now costs as much as \$40 million annually to administer, and up to 9,000 civil servants have been hired in the last three years.

"The merry-go-round won't begin to slow down until people who favour better spending control—and their numbers will almost certainly rise after this year's tax trauma...."

The fact is, I remember that back in 1985, the cost of rent control was about \$8 million. It's well over \$50 million now, a lot of it in adminis-trivia that this government sponsors.

Look at this:

"Mr Nixon obviously reckoned that Ontario taxpayers would be impressed by headlines talking about a balanced budget. Lost in the fine print will be the two major reasons why the budget fell into the black: an economic boom that continuously produced revenues far in excess of provincial estimates, and big tax increases in post-election Ontario budgets."

How true that was. It was boom times in the 1980s—how much we wish it was now—yet the government just bled us like mad.

The Hamilton Spectator in 1988—this is a little out of sequence—talks about Ontario taxpayers paying so much more.

I go on. Back in 1990, a quote here on the Grit budgets, how many times the Liberals picked our pockets. "These guys want to grab another majority from us before the economy turns sour for everyone." That's what happened. They thought they'd be opportunists back then, called the election, and to their surprise, fell out of office.

I wanted to put that on for a little bit of fun. I know they don't like it, but the fact is, the Liberals haven't really come to grips with the legacy they created for the new government in Ontario. They created so much of the problem through their spending, through their taxes, through their lack of controls even then, and now all they can do is criticize everything. If they only came forward with some suggestions, some ways to improve the scene, then they would bear some listening to or some respect, but the Liberals think there are more votes to be gained by just damning and condemning and criticizing, and not for a moment coming forward with constructive suggestions.

That in itself is cause for concern by the people in Ontario. The Liberals really are bankrupt of ideas, bankrupt of suggestions. Their only way of dealing with things is to just roar and shout and complain. They don't accept any of the justice of their being in opposition, having been in power, because Ontario saw through them.

There's one final point I want to touch on. I am going to be short of time—I don't think there's much

chance the Legislature will extend my time, because I would like to say more—but some of these points we will be able to raise.

1840

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has done a number of studies on the differential between salaries in the public sector and the private sector, and I have a few quotes here which I would like to put into the record. What they've done is a survey in a number of cities across Canada to study the wage gaps between people who serve in the public sector and the private sector. The comparisons that were made were on a strictly apples-to-apples basis, using only full-time public and private sector employees with the same occupations working within each city or region.

"It has become clear that the systems and procedures that determine public sector pay and benefit levels, while very beneficial to employees, leave taxpayers and other employers with very little say, even though they ultimately pay the bills."

What's happened is that the federal and provincial—and I don't want to get into the federal, because that's not my problem. But the wage differential at the provincial level versus the private sector, in Toronto, public sector employees get 11.2% more than private sector; in North Bay, public sector employees get 15.6% more than the private sector, and in Thunder Bay, 17% more.

So the data really say that in the province of Ontario we have to look at the whole public sector and see if we can find some money within that sector to somehow even the playing field between the public and private sectors, find some money within that. If it's through pay freeze and salary freeze, let's try to do it that way. We at least are beginning that process with this debate.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I thank the honourable member for Markham for his presentation and invite any questions and/or comments.

Seeing none, is there further debate? I recognize the honourable member for Scarborough West.

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I come out of a long and proud history within the union movement in the province of Ontario. I also come out of a very long and proud history as a public sector worker for the federal government. It's the fact that this government is comprised of members who come from those kinds of histories and the kind of history in community action groups that in fact what we're presenting before this Legislature is a mechanism that we believe shows very much how we both value and respect the role that unions have played in our society and the important role that unions still continue to play in our society, both in protecting the interests of working people as well as in working for the social justice that all of us wish to benefit from in this province.

I believe that this legislation and the mechanisms that we've been following also are geared to try very much to show the respect that this government holds for the public employees who work for us. I know certainly as a minister of this government the kind of respect I have, and that's shared by my colleagues, for the tremendous, hard work that the competent people who provide the services to people all throughout this province are proud to work to provide. It's that kind of tradition in fact that has empowered this government to work so ambitiously on so many things, not only in terms of various kinds of social justice legislation but also in terms of endless numbers of job creation and job protection programs.

One of the things that we believe is necessary if this government is going to be able to achieve the protection of jobs and services is that we in fact work to protect the value of working people's taxpaying dollars as well. We believe that one of the mechanisms needed to be able to do that is to help us to prevent the interest on the public debt from becoming the most expensive program that this provincial government provides, because if it does, we believe that most expensive program of servicing the interest on the public debt in fact would simply be a program of income redistribution from working people who are the taxpayers of this province to the wealthy people who hold the bonds where we have to borrow the money from.

Passing that money up in redistribution to the people who hold the bonds this province has to borrow is simply a mechanism for sending money out of this economy. When we talk of the concern of taking money out of this economy, that's exactly what that does, and also sends the money out of Canada, since there is just not enough money to be borrowed within this country, within this province, to service the debt at the level to which it's growing.

The approach we're taking to try to save the taxpaying dollar is one that is also geared very much to trying to protect jobs and protect public services that all of us receive at the high quality that they are provided by the public service of Ontario.

There are many reasons why we're acting the way we are. Those reasons are based on respect, those reasons are based on common sense and economic sense, to try to ensure that we avoid the slashing of jobs, to try to ensure that we avoid simply legislating the rollbacks that we know the other parties in this House would do if they were in office during this difficult fiscal period.

It's for that reason that we have worked very hard as a government to try to negotiate with our public sector unions the programs in a revolutionary kind of way that would in fact protect those services, protect those jobs, while introducing revolutionary new kinds of programs in negotiation with the public sector unions. We attempted to do that at one master table. I believe that a main reason for not being able to do that was a

number of structural problems that existed that prevented us from doing that at a master table.

It's for that reason we've developed legislation that is not simply slashing legislation, it's not simply rolling-back legislation. In fact it's legislation that attempts to establish a framework to allow those negotiations to continue on a sectoral and local basis, hoping that without those structural problems we can sit down with our partners the unions, our partners the people who work with us, the public sector employees, to try to come to agreements in a negotiated fashion.

Coming from the union movement as I do, I know very well that the kinds of things we've been trying to negotiate in these negotiations are in fact the kinds of things that, where unions in our society have been able to negotiate them, they have only been able to negotiate them after strikes of many months, up to 18 months, when they've done so. I think, for instance, of the Canadian Auto Workers, who have proudly gone out and fought for their workers through lengthy strikes to get what they call SUB plans, or supplementary unemployment benefits, to protect members who are laid off.

In this case, our government has been interested in attempting, and is still interested in attempting, to negotiate job security funds, effectively those SUB plans, that would allow workers to have up to one year of full pay should they end up being laid off. In fact, we're working very hard to minimize any kind of layoffs, but should people be laid off, they would be guaranteed to have up to one year's full pay while being able to take advantage of tremendous job retraining programs that we're negotiating to develop, while also receiving the benefits of redeployment programs that again we believe would become a tremendous model for other employers in this society.

We're also interested, through establishing this framework, to try to encourage the negotiation of the joint trusteeship of pension plans, again something I know I fought for in the union movement and I know unions in fact have every good reason to want to try to achieve.

We're also trying very much to encourage the kind of joint partnerships that would allow, for instance, joint union-management teams to try to identify further waste that can be eliminated beyond what this government has already been able, with our public sector employees, to do. The concept behind those joint committees would be that any kind of further waste that can be identified and eliminated, the value of that would be put 50% towards further reducing the target we're trying to find through the social contract negotiations, that target of \$2 billion, and 50% towards further enhancing the retraining programs we want to negotiate with the unions.

These are the kinds of things this legislation is trying to provide, the framework to help empower people, the partners at the negotiating table, on a sectoral and local

basis to be able to negotiate. We have designed into this legislation both carrots and sticks on both sides, not just on unions but also on the employers, to try to help facilitate a negotiated process.

The carrots include that if employers participate in negotiating reasonable settlements that are acceptable to the unions, they would be able to deal with a lower target as being the target in those negotiations for savings. Where unions succeed in negotiating those contracts with their employers, they would be able to access further job security funds to help make sure in fact that we can move from a six months' rate of full pay to that one year rate of full pay I spoke of, while they're able to access redeployment programs, while they're able to access retraining programs that we're negotiating together.

1850

In terms of the fail-safe provisions of this legislation referred to, I want to make it very clear that this government worked very hard to ensure that fail-safe does not provide just a stick to encourage the unions to negotiate settlements, but also a stick to encourage the employers to want to negotiate a settlement as well, namely, the fact that if there aren't jointly negotiated, agreed settlements arrived at by August 1, the employers would be bound to a sectoral redeployment program that they may not wish, either, to have imposed upon them rather than negotiating it.

I should also make it clear that, again in support of trying to help even the playing field between unions and employers, we are intent on developing regulations empowered under this legislation to ensure that employers must be open and must disclose information to the union partners at the negotiating tables, to try to ensure that unions have the benefit of the full information needed that employers have at their disposal, to arrive at fair negotiated settlements throughout this process before August 1.

Consistent with this government's policy of constantly working to protect the vulnerable in our society, we have made it clear that we're exempting employees who earn less than \$30,000 per year from the provisions of the social contract negotiations in terms of having to face losing any benefits, freezes, layoffs etc.

I should point out that even in the one area of the possible imposition, if negotiated agreements aren't arrived at, of the possibility of employees having to face up to 12 days per year without pay or layoffs for that period of time, the point there is very clearly to allow that to happen only to prevent permanent layoffs, an effort that we're making to try to ensure that we protect the jobs of public sector workers and the services that the people of Ontario badly need and expect to have continued.

In closing, I'd like to point out once again that in the kind of things this government is interested in negotiat-

ing, the kinds of things this government is encouraging to be established to be the role models in our society for other employers to look to, where they're facing the kind of fiscal crunch that we have been facing, we're attempting to ensure that those things are arrived at as models for negotiating without strikes, in spite of the fact that those unions that so far in our society have managed to achieve those kinds of precedent-setting collective agreement provisions have only been able to do them through strikes.

I want to say that I am so hopeful, tremendously hopeful, that this framework that we're offering through this legislation in this House, this framework of legislation that we're designing and putting before this House, will be one that truly is able to help encourage employers facilitate unions to arrive at effective collective agreements and the protection of their members' jobs and of all of our services.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I have a couple of questions for the member that she may answer. In her speech, she talked about how they wanted to protect jobs in the public sector, and if you will remember, going back to your first budget, that's exactly what we said when you were trying to spend your way out of the recession—we said the only way to protect the jobs was to reduce spending then, and that the longer we waited, the more the cuts had to come.

At that time, we were criticized for saying that you need to cut back spending. That's the same rationale that we used in this Legislature when we were fighting the first budget and we were told, "No, we're fighting the recession, not the deficit."

It wasn't even as if it was something new. We all knew that the federal government was facing the same problem. So it wasn't as if it was a new problem. They were already bankrupt and in a position of having to cut. I say to my friend the member opposite that it the same rationale we used on the first budget, saying you have to protect jobs and it has to be done now by not giving big increases. That is exactly why we said that going back to the first budget.

The other thing that we talk about is the 95% of your salary for one year. It's interesting that one of the big concerns of this government wasn't how to protect the jobs; it was, "When we know we're going to have people laid off, how are we going to give them enough money so that they can live?" I honestly, truly, really think that most of the people out there are more concerned about keeping their jobs, not in negotiating a 95% pay situation if they lose their jobs. I know she mentioned the auto workers, but I really think that the major thrust should have been keeping jobs.

Also, finally, if I have a little bit of time, you talked about retraining. The problem is, as we've said all along, and we agree in downscaling the public sector, that you have to be upscaling the private sector and

retraining so they can come into the private sector where the jobs are being created, and that isn't happening.

I would ask a couple of those questions to the member, and I appreciate the fact that she's tried to enlighten the House. I look forward to adding some more comments when I speak.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I want to say that I was surprised at the content of much of the remarks of the member for Scarborough West, whom we know has had a distinguished career in a leadership position in the union movement, and I believe her when she says that she has enormous respect for people who work in the public service.

I think I want to echo, in commenting on her remarks, a response that was made to me by one of her colleagues when I said, "What would the response of the New Democratic members have been had this been Liberal legislation?" and the answer was, "There would be blood on the floor."

The kinds of issues that the member for Scarborough West has included in her remarks are a justification of ill-conceived and unworkable legislation that really belie her history in the union movement and the leadership position that she held. I feel cheated that the member did not raise some of the issues that are on the table now with those who are bargaining for public sector workers themselves. We forget, when the argument is universally accepted that the public service is the big, evil sector here, that the public service includes people who care for people in our nursing homes, orderlies in our hospitals, people who take our garbage to the dump and others who are not simply paper shufflers in government bureaucracy.

I would have liked to have heard more from the member from Scarborough West about who is in fact standing up in this place for those who do the work of government and who deliver public services.

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): First of all, I'd like to thank the member from Scarborough for her comments because she does reflect—I remember that many times we were out in front of this Legislature for the simple fact. They question why we were out in front of this Legislature. Because the Liberals wouldn't open the doors and allow us inside. They made major, drastic changes without even consulting with the labour movement, and those ideas we had they thought were very draconian.

But I must say that the ones that we did—

Mr Offer: Which ones? Name one.

Mr Hope: "Name one," he says: Bill 162; Bill 208; let's deal with the tire tax; let's keep adding them up.

Interjections.

Mr Hope: Keep adding them up, because the Liberals are sitting there asking where would we be?

First of all, if the Liberals were in government, even if the Tories were in government, there would have been no consultation. It would have been exactly nail the coffin shut to every worker. They would have never dreamed about a supplementary benefit program. They would have never dreamed about a training program. We couldn't even get them to put money in for proper training programs. They had their own ideas and they kept with their own ideas.

I think what is very important is that we had all sectors at the table, which would never have been accomplished through the Liberal government, because I know many a time we have sat out in front of this Legislature, put ideas put forward and not even been listened to on many of those ideas.

There is no comparator between what we are doing today and what the Liberals did and the Tories did in the past, because what we're trying to do is that we're trying to work with our partners. I know they have a hard time understanding what partners are all about because there was only one partner in the past, and that was dealing with a lot of the corporate people who had their own agenda, and they had to watch them, the Liberals and Tories, because they had to watch out for their financial contributions at election time.

I think it's important that what we were trying to do was to bring all sectors together, employers and employees and government, which is a major accomplishment that has never been accomplished before. I've seen it time and time again that workers were trying to get access to the doors of this place and were never, ever, able to get that.

The Speaker: I recognize the member for Scarborough West for up to two minutes for her reply.
1900

Hon Ms Swarbrick: First, to the member for Oakville South, I'd like to point out that when I sat on the legislative finance committee this last winter, banks, traditional financial institutions, appeared before us and many of them said that the whole reason that this recession has gone on as long as it did, which even they had no idea it would, was because not only of the fact that it was your normal, cyclical recession; it's gone on as long as it did because of the policies that the member from Oakville South's federal party has implemented: the policies of free trade, the goods and services tax, the high dollar, the high interest rates, the cuts of \$5 billion a year to the Ontario budget; those are the kinds of reasons why this government is being forced to be in the situation it's in today.

In terms of the member for Halton Centre's comments, I point out that if the Liberals were in government today they'd be making no effort to go through all the negotiations we're trying to go through with the public sector unions. They'd be making no effort to offer things like joint trusteeship of pension plans, the

job security funds, the joint waste management committees; there'd be none of that kind of respect of the unions representing public sector employees.

When she refers to the concerns for the care givers in long-term care, this government is putting 685 million new dollars into long-term care to make sure that those people are there to help provide those services to people in need. This government is the one that's working to take care of people at the lower-income levels through pay equity, through employment equity, through labour relations reform, including CECBA reform. There's no end to the other things we're doing to try to protect workers at those levels.

I want to close by pointing out that the Liberals were in power in the record-breaking, revenue-increasing times in this province in this century. In the mid-1980s, in spite of the fact that they had the beauty of taking in incredible reams of increasing revenues—they increased taxes so many times. If they had only—and I often think it's criminal—saved in good times for the bad times, we wouldn't be in this situation today.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired. The honourable member for Mississauga North.

Mr Offer: I'm very pleased to take part in this debate. I'd rather that the bill, as drafted, were not before the Legislature, because I think it's a bad piece of legislation and for that I am opposed to the legislation. In the time permitted in this debate, I hope to go through some of the reasons why I stand opposed to the legislation.

Before I get into that, you can't help but respond to some of the comments that are made in the Legislature. There was a comment made dealing with the hearings on Bill 162, which was changes to the Workers' Compensation Act, and on Bill 208, occupational health and safety. I think the record will show that there were extensive public hearings undertaken, sponsored and supported by the then Liberal government; that it was and has always been the position of the Liberal government, when proposing legislation, recognizing that there will be those who are opposed to it, that they do have a right to be heard, either through their representative in this chamber or, indeed, through public hearings. In fact, I think the record will show that there were extensive public hearings which travelled throughout the province. I'll not say anything further on that point, but to just set the record straight.

I would dare say, Mr Speaker, if you would check your records, that the present NDP government has invoked time allocation—also known, for want of a better word, as closure—on legislation and pieces of legislation in this chamber more than any other government in the history of the province. I think it will show that the NDP government has, time and time again, closed off debate on important pieces of legislation, has stopped duly elected members of all three parties from

speaking their thoughts, their opinions, their minds, and taking to this floor the comments and concerns of their constituents, and have been stopped by the government, number one, through its rule changes, which have, in my opinion, institutionalized time allocation, and secondly, through the unending use of that rule. I believe that is something that this present government will never, ever be able to defend, because it strikes at the very heart of why we are here.

We are here to speak on pieces of legislation; we are here to bring the concerns of our constituents to this Legislature; we are here to make certain that, where public policy dictates, we move pieces of legislation to the committee hearing process for public hearing and for those committees to travel throughout the province. I believe in and am proud of the record of the previous Liberal government in doing that with a number of pieces of legislation.

I am extremely dissatisfied with and critical of the current NDP government, which has closed this chamber like no other government before. I say that just at the outset, and I recognize that it doesn't speak to the legislation at hand, but I was quite upset with the comments made by some of the NDP members, thinking that people do not have memories, thinking that there aren't recorded transcripts of the goings-on of this Legislature and thinking that they can put over on the public something which just isn't borne out in fact. I will every time, being given the opportunity, remind those who are watching of that fact, because they are not just my constituents but indeed they are all of our constituents, and that is our responsibility and obligation.

As I said, I am opposed to Bill 48. I am opposed because, though I support restraint, I do support it in a responsible fashion, and Bill 48 is characterized by chaos, incompetence and mismanagement. In the time permitted, I hope to underscore a few of those areas.

The government feels and states that they are in some sort of a fiscal morass that is not unique to this government but indeed to all governments, and I will disagree. I think that if we take a look back to the first NDP budget of 1990, we will see the germ, the seed of Bill 48, because it was in their first budget that they made the errors that Bill 48 is responsive to.

There was no other jurisdiction—and I do not speak of party affiliation; I speak federally and provincially across this country—that sought in 1990 in its budget to try to buy its way out. By that point in time, governments across this country recognized that we were not just in a cyclical recession; we were in something much deeper. Whatever you wish to call it, a restructuring, a reorganization, it was something other than the normal, cyclical recession, and all governments save the NDP government in Ontario recognized that, recognized that you could not spend your way out.

This government did not. They threw caution to the wind. I believe they did not listen to the advice of, most likely, many treasury officials, who would have recognized this, and they said, "We are going to spend, spend, spend." Bill 48 is reactive to that. Bill 48 is as if it were an eraser and it is trying to rub out the 1990 NDP budget, and it's going to try to do that on the backs of people throughout this province, people who should not have to deal with the ramifications of what this bill is going to do.

1910

Just before I get into some of the aspects, I am aware that just one year ago, almost to the day, we were talking about another piece of legislation, Bill 40. Do we not always recall that, changes to the Ontario Labour Relations Act? I think we have to put this debate into that context.

July 6, 1992, almost a year ago, it was stated by the Minister of Labour in his opening comments on Bill 40: "The need for labour and management to work together in the spirit of cooperation, involvement and trust is greater now than at any time in Ontario's history." This flies in the face of the principle of Bill 48. Bill 48 does not create cooperation. It does not engender trust.

The minister went on and said, "These amendments"—and he speaks in these terms to the amendments on Bill 40—"are designed to promote real exchange between labour and management on any and all workplace issues." The principle underlying Bill 48 seeks to stop exchange between labour and management on workplace issues. The minister went on to say that these measures will "promote the smooth operation of the collective bargaining process and...offer protection for the jobs of workers involved in labour disputes." Bill 48 does not promote the smooth operation of the collective bargaining process. Bill 48 strips away the collective bargaining process.

These are just some of the quotes in Hansard from the Minister of Labour one year ago, talking about the need for cooperation, the need to protect workers' rights, the need to smooth the collective bargaining process.

A year later, in Bill 48, we have what is called a fail-safe provision. What is a fail-safe provision? A fail-safe provision under Bill 48 is that if no local agreement is reached, the fail-safe provisions are triggered, and these measures are that compensation of employees is frozen from June 14, 1993, to March 31, 1996; that during the three-year period, merit increases, cost-of-living or other advancement on pay scales and other compensation increases are also frozen at the 1993 level. If these above measures will not allow the employer to meet its reduction target, the employer may require employees to take unpaid leaves of absence of up to 12 days per year.

I speak not to the substance of those provisions but to the principle of a fail-safe provision, because it isn't

a fail-safe, it is a guillotine. The NDP government is telling the workers in this province to put their collective heads under the guillotine. They will be sharpening the blades until August 1, saying: "I think you can arrive at an agreement. I think that we can smooth out the collective bargaining process. We don't want to pull the trigger, but Bill 48 will allow us to." That, to me, in principle is something extremely objectionable in terms of the collective bargaining process that has been given to workers in this province.

It is not a fail-safe measure at all, it is a guillotine motion, and from the time we debate this bill until the time that guillotine is triggered is nothing less than the sharpening of the blade.

The workers in this province have every right to be concerned and worried. We and I support restraint, but I also support respect, respect for people, because there are real people out there who are worried about what this NDP government is going to do. Real people out there with real families are concerned about when they trigger that guillotine, and real people are concerned with how sharp that blade is, because they know that no matter how sharp the blade is, when it's triggered, it's going to cause damage.

I cannot believe that anyone in this Legislature can support a piece of legislation which so clearly flies in the face of the freedom to bargain freely, and in this respect, I underline, we support restraint, but so do the workers, so does the public sector. They have come forward with their solution, with their ideas. Is that not collective bargaining? Why is the government so adamant to turn its back on those groups?

Why is the government so committed not to listen to what people have to say about real solutions to the mess that the NDP government put this province in when it introduced the budget of 1990, which flew in the face of every other government of whatever political stripe in terms of a recession and restructuring?

The people in this province are going to be suffering for that incompetence. The people in this province are going to be suffering from the chaos that has been created by the government. The people in this province, whether they be public sector workers or not, are going to suffer from the inconsistency of the government in terms of its principles. I guess when a government is inconsistent in its principles, it means that it has no principles. One can only conclude that when I read from Hansard the statements made by the Minister of Labour on July 6, 1992, and what I read is the substance of what Bill 48 calls for.

I am concerned about this bill because I do support restraint, and I do not believe that this bill is truly reflective of the need for restraint.

I turn to page 16 of the act, section 26, where it talks about special leave. I know that there are many who are watching this debate on TV, there are many people—

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): I hope not.

Mr Offer: The Minister of Agriculture and Food casts disparaging remarks, but the fact of the matter is that there are hundreds of thousands of people who are concerned with the actions you are going to support and your government is going to take. They are concerned in terms of themselves, they are concerned as to how it will affect their families, they are concerned in terms of the level of service that municipalities are going to be able to provide, and they want this debate to proceed fully so that those who are so interested have an opportunity to hear all members who wish to take part.

I speak to the special leave aspect. It says, and I want to be clear that I am just paraphrasing the sections, and I expect that I will be doing so accurately: "If employees perform critical functions and the employer is unable, without impairing those functions, to meet its expenditure reduction target by utilizing unpaid leaves of absence...the employer may require those employees to take special leaves."

The section goes on to say, "The compensating days off shall be paid days off, taken on mutually convenient dates," and this is the point: They "may be carried forward." These dates may be carried forward to future years, including years after March 31, 1996.

1920

It is clear from this legislation that those unpaid leaves are not lost; they are deferred. March 31, 1996, there is going to be a ball of debt rolling back to this Legislature. There is no question Bill 48 prescribes that; Bill 48 dictates that. It says that you are going to take this debt off your books for the next three years, but it is not going to vanish. It is just going to be outside the Legislature; it's just going to be outside and off the treasury books. But don't worry, it's there, and it is coming back.

The question we have to ask is: Is that how you support restraint, by deferring to another time and, I dare say, to another government? Is that how you deal with the real problems that your government has created? You are dealing with them on the backs of many people and families in this province, and you have not come to grips with the impact and the ramifications as to what this bill means to real people in this province.

In that area I want to talk about, in the short while that I have left, the impact that it's going to have on municipalities. Municipalities have already had their budgets set. I, as the member for Mississauga North, reside in the city of Mississauga. I have received my interim tax bill. I know that the city of Mississauga, under Mayor Hazel McCallion, has been involved in matters such as this for many, many years; that the city of Mississauga has made certain that its finances are well taken care of; that it is a pay-as-you-go type of

municipality.

The people in the city of Mississauga are the beneficiaries of the mayor's vision, as well as members of council. They have cut their budget this year. They have sent out their tax bill. Let's remember, in passing, that the city of Mississauga reduced its portion of the taxes; that the city of Mississauga's tax portion for residents is lower this year than it was last year. That is a testament to the mayor and to the council and, of course, nothing to the provincial government. But they have done that. They have cut their expenditures to the bone. They, I believe, are representative of many municipalities around this province who also have taken a hard look; who have already cut their budget; who have in fact already instituted a freeze on pay; who have already told their workers that there will be unpaid leave. Now this bill says that, "Notwithstanding that which you have done, you have to do it again."

It's sort of like saying, "The car is out of gas, but we're expecting you to take a little bit more from the tank." I don't believe that the government, in terms of the way and the timing of this legislation, has recognized, firstly, that municipalities, far from following the provincial government in this area, have led the way and that they have already set their budgets, that they have already taken many measures to make certain that they can maintain the services to the people in their areas and do so in a fiscally responsible manner.

This bill, far from encompassing restraint, indeed causes confusion, because it is now throwing all of the municipalities, lower and upper tier, meaning the cities and the regions, into a state of chaos. They have been doing their work and the provincial government has not.

The provincial government still is not able to understand that you don't and can't get any gas from an empty tank. They still have not yet acknowledged that the budget which they introduced in this province in the year of 1990 is the cause of Bill 48. They are the ones to blame, and they are seeking to lay that blame on the backs of workers across this province and beyond. "Beyond": I mean not just the workers but to people who require services in their municipalities, in their hospitals, schools, colleges and universities. We will all suffer from your mismanagement.

As I read the bill, I am shocked by the amount of information that isn't here. I am shocked at the amount of information that is left to regulation. Many of those who are watching on their legislative channel will recognize that when things are left to regulation, they are not subject to discussion in this Legislature. They are not subject to public hearings. They are not subject to the scrutiny of the citizens of this province. They are at the whim of the minister. They are indeed laws that will be made by the stroke of a pen, and it does not matter how it will impact on real people in this province; this Legislature is shut out from indeed taking part

in any of that debate. I think that is shocking. I think that it is something which this government has again not yet come to grips with and I believe it is something which this government must stand fully accountable for.

I speak about the collective bargaining approach and, in principle, how I am so firmly against this. I think there are members in this Legislature who are part and were part of the standing committee on resources development. The resources committee was charged with the responsibility of looking after changes to the Labour Relations Act, Bill 40, and I alluded to that earlier on. I think they will recognize many of the statements which they made. They will remember the statements made by members of the opposition. We were, and I was, in opposition to that bill and am still and I believe that that bill flew in the face of workers' rights in terms of being able to organize in a free and open and democratic manner, and always will have that position.

But notwithstanding that, there were members of that resources committee who heard day in and day out, no matter what their position was on the bill, the importance of the collective bargaining approach. They heard how that is something that must always be protected. Once you erode that, you can never, ever get it back. You just can't restore that type of relationship to the way it was, because Bill 48 will have always been introduced.

I am hopeful that there will be members in the Conservative Party and in the NDP who will take a look at the provisions of Bill 48 and remember some of the discussion around the importance of smooth collective bargaining, the importance of respecting the interests of management and labour and will come to say, "Bill 48 doesn't respect those principles, and on that basis it should be opposed." I am hopeful there will be members in this Legislature who will think about the people who are going to be affected by Bill 48, the men and women and their families, not just the public sector workers, but also including them, the people who rely on services in a variety of areas.

And yes, we have to take a look at how we can responsibly restrain spending, and it can be done. The sadness of all of this is that there have been options put on the table, ways in which these things can be addressed, ways in which they can be addressed in an upfront, responsible manner, responsive to the needs and the concerns of many people, responsive to the needs of the general public, and encompassing and respecting the principles of collective bargaining.

Bill 48 fails, fails and fails. For those members, especially those who took part in the debate on Bill 40, you must ask yourselves how is it that you could have made a speech on Bill 40, changes to the Labour Relations Act, and support Bill 48. You cannot do that.

Hon Mr Buchanan: Are you supporting Bill 40 now?

Mr Offer: The Minister of Agriculture and Food says, "Is this the Bill 40 debate?"

1930

Hon Mr Buchanan: Are you supporting Bill 40 now?

Mr Offer: Mr Minister, in a strange way it sort of is, because the principles in Bill 40 dealt with—

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): You are so confused, Steve. I think you are just lying.

Mr Offer: Sorry?

Hon Mr Pouliot: Mr Speaker, I think the member just lies there and says nothing that is relevant.

The Speaker: The Minister of Transportation knows better. Would he withdraw the unparliamentary remark, please.

Hon Mr Pouliot: Mr Speaker, with respect, I was provoked. All I did mention, sir, and I beg your understanding, but the member just lies there and says nothing relevant, sir. I did not impute motives. I did not hint that the member is economical with the truth or tends to shy away from it. It's an expression, Mr Speaker, not to impute motive in the least. I thank you, sir, for your consideration.

The Speaker: The honourable member.

Mr Offer: The honourable Minister of Transportation has a reputation of being, at the very best, vague, and his final comments just underscore that. If the minister had listened, I said that in the time period there have been significant proposals as to how restraint can be achieved, proposals brought forward by workers in this province. The problem is that the NDP government, and the Minister of Transportation are unwilling to listen. Rather, they would like to make the 1990 budgetary mistake that the government introduced on the backs of all people in this province. Bill 48 is in principle wrong. Bill 48 is in substance misleading. Bill 48, without question, hurts people in this province—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Thank you. Your time has expired.

Mr Offer: —and it is one which I am firmly opposed to.

Mr Carr: I am pleased to enter the debate and to add a few thoughts on this bill. I must say that, going back to the discussions on this topic, members of the government side might not believe this, but I honestly, truly think all members had hoped that the initial discussions would have been successful, although I guess I was a little bit suspect.

I had the opportunity to spend, I guess it was April 23, on Global TV with my friend from Scarborough-Agincourt and Mr Sid Ryan. I asked Sid at that time: "You know you're getting the cuts now. What would

you rather have, cuts in pay or layoff of workers?" He told me at that time: "We're not going to make that decision. The government is, because we've got half the members who want cuts in salary and half who want layoffs. That is going to be a government decision."

While we wished you success in the initial talks, we're not too surprised with the results. The whole process after that quite frankly was a bit of a circus and a bit botched.

But I'm not going to talk too much about whose fault it is. I want to talk very briefly about why we need to do some things, because, let's face it, this isn't a problem that we're just facing here in the province of Ontario. The federal government is bankrupt. I look at the articles down in the United States. The headlines in one of the magazines say: "Why Are People Down on Clinton? The President Isn't Setting Priorities or Cutting Spending Enough," and "His Disapproval Rating Is Up At 71%." I think that was even a worse rating than you guys had across from the other side, this government when it came in. It isn't a problem that we're facing.

I want to quickly talk a little bit about why we're in the circumstances we are in, because I don't think you can talk about cutting spending unless you realize where we are at. For this, I will refer to the government's budget. I am, I guess, in a sense talking on their behalf for the need for restraint. As many of the members know, I sat on the standing committee on finance and economic affairs and spent a great deal of time encouraging them to cut spending and not to increase taxes. I put together the minority report, which hopefully, if I have a little time, I'll talk about.

I want to explain why we're in the situation we're in and needing to cut, and I will refer to the budget on page 96. If you look at the total debt per capita, about 10 years ago it was about \$3,300 provincially for every man, woman and child in this province. It is now \$7,600. So basically we have doubled it in about 10 years. Quite frankly, that's why we're in the circumstances that we are in today.

The circumstances that we are facing now are laid out very clearly. In 1984, we spent about \$23 billion. This year, we'll hit about \$43 billion over the next little while. So frankly, as we sit here, we are facing a serious problem. What I did over the last little while, in our minority report, is put together some of the ideas about what we should be doing, and I want to talk very briefly because I don't think anybody has talked about where we're at.

I put together about a 700-page article on this particular piece of legislation. I was saying to my friend across the aisle there a moment ago that I spent last night thoroughly reading the legislation. I think the people on the other side heard me talk about what is happening in this province. They aren't too surprised to hear me say that we need to cut spending. I'm not going to spend a

great deal of time in looking at some of the other areas because I want to discuss this bill.

In our minority report, we've talked about quite a few areas where spending should be cut—non-profit housing, social assistance—but I want to get specific on this bill.

On the NDP's plan to legislate the public sector wage concession, one of the problems I've got is that it's short term. What I've talked about all along is that we need to scale back the level of government to the 1985 level, but one of the concerns I've got is that at the end of this we're really not going to scale back the amount too much. I believe Ontarians want a permanent, structural reduction in the size and cost of government.

Instead, I believe they're getting a short-term fix which only defers a lot of the fundamental reforms that must happen if we are to salvage our economy. At the end of three years, the government may be the same size; it may be lower. As I said to my friend opposite, I really, honestly, truly believe that with some of the mechanisms in there, we are going to get some sectoral agreements as a result of what's happening.

Among some of the things that we've talked about doing specifically—because there's the whole broader issue of where we could have got \$2 billion and where we should be cutting, in our minority report—but some of the things I think we could do specifically with this bill is start by—and I will lay out some of the things that we should be doing.

Number one, we should have a three-year hiring freeze, which has the potential to reduce the annual cost of the public sector by over \$2 billion. We need to scale back the number of employees we have, through attrition. We need to have, as we've talked about many times, a wage freeze and, as you know, we talked about this going back to the first budget. We said that if you continue to spend, all you're going to do is push it off into the next few years and it's going to be more difficult. Quite frankly, during that period of time, going way back to the election, both the NDP and the Liberals laughed at us.

I can say to the public and to the members opposite that no one is laughing now. I-told-you-so's really don't help too much, but if you'd listened during that period of time when you were increasing the amount of civil servants, when you took the total salary and increased it by about 13.5%, the increases were 5.9%, the rest of the provinces—so it wasn't a political issue. Other provinces were setting wage caps, salary freezes, two years ago. We said you should be doing that and you laughed at us, and now nobody is laughing with the result of what's happened.

I hope that some of the spirit of some of the things we're hoping to do in terms of some of the amendments will be listened to, because I think that if there's one

thing that's clear during that period of the first budget, we tried everything to get you to agree. We tried everything including trying to shut this place down and no, you were right: We were going to spend our way out of it. I hope one lesson has been learned: that members of the opposition, particularly in our party, want to offer some constructive solutions.

We talk about whistle-blowing provisions to protect public servants who report fraud, waste or abuses from the workplace, while we can get some of these substantial savings coming through.

We talk about provisions to discourage government departments from spending their entire budgets within the fiscal year or eliminating what is referred to as the year-end burnoffs, otherwise they would face rollbacks.

We talk about performance bonuses for the public service based on efficiencies and productivity schemes, and this isn't new. If you go to Oakville at the Ford Motor Co out there, the Canadian Auto Workers have had a lot of these provisions as well.

1940

They talk about empowering unions, yet we really truly need to get the people on the front lines, who know where the cuts should be made and know where the waste is. I need only refer you to a typical example of that. I got a call about a month ago from a lady who works in the Halton region. She's single with two kids, and she said she used to make more money when she was on social assistance with all the benefits than she makes now. She said: "I see so much waste, so much abuse, so much fraud. Mr Carr, you tell me why I shouldn't just quit and go back on social assistance."

It isn't just us and the front-line workers saying that. In that particular case, the auditor said we're looking at about a \$600-million fraud and mismanagement in the social assistance system.

If we're going to truly get some of the cuts that are necessary, we need to empower the people who are on the front lines. They're the ones who know if there's any abuse in the system; they've been through it and they see the people coming in daily. So one of the things we've talked about is performance bonuses for public sector employees based on efficiency and productivity gains.

We also talked about the establishment, as we did in our minority report, of an expenditure review committee. We're talking a great deal, having public hearings across this province on the Fair Tax Commission, but nobody is looking at the spending side. Quite frankly, until you solve the spending problem, there will never, ever be any opportunity for tax relief. We've said continually that the problem we have in this province isn't a revenue problem but a spending problem, and we've offered a number of solutions.

We believe that if you listen to some of the ideas and

the amendments we are proposing, basically those six points encompassed in the amendments we are moving, we honestly, truly believe you would have a better chance at scaling down the size of the public sector.

Over the next little while, as we look at this particular piece of legislation, there are some major faults with it. I don't think there is anybody in the province saying we shouldn't cut back. Ultimately, the people are going to make a choice between this piece of legislation—and I think you will get some sectoral agreements. Some of the provisions in there, the 20% reductions in transfers, the transfer cuts, will allow a lot of employers to say: "Look, this is the amount, and if by August 1 there is no agreement in place, this is what it will mean to you. There will be no enhancement provisions for job layoffs." I really believe that both sides may come together as a result of this legislation.

I think it's been an entirely cumbersome process. We could much more easily have cut out a lot of programs like the non-profit housing and the social assistance and got \$2 billion, rather than this whole process we put together. Hopefully, if time permits, I will get into some of the broader solutions.

It's tough as a politician to make cuts. Everybody says, "Make the cuts." Everybody makes the cuts. I know it's the same at the municipal level: Everybody's hitting you, "Don't increase taxes," but as soon as you make the cuts it's very difficult, because everybody believes there's waste in another department or another ministry, that their ministry is running efficiently.

I talked today with one of my municipalities—actually it wasn't one of my municipalities but an adjacent one—with a friend who's a local councillor, and he said, "We're already efficient in my municipality." If you talk to the 360-odd ones, they all believe they're efficient. He said, "We're being penalized, because our cuts are in our areas when we're already to the bone and efficient." Well, I don't think too many municipalities out there are saying they are not. He was worried about some of the cuts to his municipality, his \$2 million. He said, "We shouldn't get that because we're already cut back, we're already efficient." I said: "Well, what are we supposed to do? Take your word for it and cut another municipality \$2 million because you say you're efficient?" It has to be broad-based, it has to be across the board, and essentially that's what's happened.

It's going to make it difficult because, as we all know, over the last little while most municipalities have already attempted to cut, and when we get into school boards, we're in a real tough situation because so much of theirs is tied to salaries.

There are two trains of thought in speaking to trustees and municipal people. There are some municipalities that say: "Give us the power to do the cuts. We want to do it. Stay out of the road and let us do it. Just cut the

transfers—we know you have a problem—but let us do it.” There are others I’ve talked to in the municipalities, trustees and different people who say, “No, if you’re going to cut the transfers, you have to give us the authority to be able to reduce salaries or to lay off people, because if we don’t, we’ll never get the savings.”

There’s a bit of a combination. Quite frankly, I think that’s why this legislation seems so cumbersome and so confusing. I must admit that when it came in, until I read it over last night, I felt the same way. But there are some good points in there. I know we laughed at some of the fail-safe mechanisms, but when we look at some of them, there are some incentives to both sides.

Over the last little while, we have talked about what we would do. Mike Harris, going back to June 14, talked about the provisions we’ll be looking for. I think the member for Markham has included that in some of his discussion, so I won’t go through it. We’ve outlined six points which I believe will be helpful to the government, and if there are any amendments that we can get put to this bill I think they may be helpful.

Initially, when this government was empowered two years ago and we gave them suggestions, I truly believed they thought, “We know what we’re doing, so no way; we’re going to proceed.” But I want to tell you, during the February hearings when Mr Laughren, the Finance minister, came in, there was absolute terror in his eyes because he knew what we were facing in this province. Two years ago it was, “We know what we’re going to do.” I honestly, truly believe that maybe some of the amendments will come through; they’re given in the spirit of cooperation. Maybe two years ago they wouldn’t listen, but—I say this in all modesty—maybe because our record has been pretty good at predicting what will happen if you don’t, we may have some credibility with you; and also because now you’re in a crunch where you’re looking for some assistance, although I suspect there was plenty of assistance around the bargaining table during the last period of time.

This touches on everything, this particular bill. If you look at section 45—I was talking very briefly to my colleague—it outlines everything, including what will happen with MPPs’ salaries. It says in there that the provisions will allow the Minister of Finance to cut MPP salaries. We haven’t had an increase since I was elected in 1990 and I firmly believe we should not during these periods of restraint; I was one of the ones that fought. But I was interested to note that according to section 45 on page 23, I apparently am now employed by the Minister of Finance; he is deemed to be my employer. I always thought the people I work for were the fine people of Oakville South and southeast Burlington.

Interjections.

Mr Carr: I guess we have some debate on whether

we should call an election. I certainly hope one will come very soon.

But I truly believe there are a couple of principles we should adhere to in here over the next little while.

One of the ideas we’ve talked about is that there shouldn’t have been any tax increases in the last budget.

We talked about how we would help in terms of the cutbacks, the \$4 billion that needed to come out; we told you \$2 billion worth of savings. I want to talk to about what some of those amounts are.

We talked about where we see some of the problems. We talked about a moratorium on government housing. Our best-guess estimate on that—I think they’re pretty accurate, having looked at the estimates—is that we could save about \$450 million if we put a moratorium on non-profit housing in the province of Ontario today. Many people don’t realize that not only are we building them but the subsidies for them will be about \$1.2 billion over the next few years. The auditor’s report said that the cost is about two and a half times—absolutely, if you read the auditor’s report, an overwhelming condemnation of non-profit housing in the province of Ontario. I firmly believe that at a time when we’re looking at cutting nurses’ salaries, doctors’ salaries, teachers’ salaries, we should not proceed with that non-profit housing at a cost of about \$450 million a year, and ultimately costing us more because the subsidies carry on long after the program has died.

We’ve talked continually about the crackdown on health card fraud, and there are various figures. Some of the people in the unions themselves talk about \$700 million, the auditor talked about \$20 million, and somewhere in between I guess is the amount. It’s probably not as high as \$700 million, but surely at a time when we’re talking about rolling back salaries of teachers and nurses and laying off people, we have to take a serious look at that.

We have been for well over a year now talking about that particular program. As recently as a month ago, probably even less than that, my colleague from Simcoe West stood up and again talked about the fraud, where we have a health card of somebody who’s been dead three years. The problem with these health cards is that once you’ve got the cards, anybody can access them. For all we know, Americans in Buffalo could be coming across and using our health care system at a time when we’re saying to doctors and nurses, “Sorry, we’re going to cut back your salary,” and where, as we heard yesterday, we may be potentially closing hospitals. We now have the Minister of Health with the ability to ration health care with some of the provisions that were in. So what we’re saying is that if there’s a potential for fraud, it should be stopped.

1950

We also talked about the better management of the social assistance program. Again, it wasn’t us who

talked about the fraud. The fraud that is in there over the last little while could be upwards of \$600 million. The auditor says about 10%. I honestly, truly believe it's higher and I would give some of the members opposite who are talking about that some of the things that we would do with social assistance. I say to the Yorkview brother, one of the View Brothers, this is what we would do. Some of the provisions are similar to what you started. We would act on the SARC recommendation to link social assistance to employment by using welfare dollars to finance subsidies to employers hiring social assistance recipients. So it's the best of both worlds: Half the cost is paid by employers, half by the government, but people are then getting some training so that they have some future, rather than having people who have basically been unemployed.

We talked about immediate steps to determine why the recovery rate on outstanding welfare is only 3%. I will read a headline from my local paper, if I can find it here. I believe I have it in here. It says, "Fraud Buster Saves Halton \$72,000." They hired a welfare investigator. He has prosecuted 17 people. He saved Halton region \$72,000. But, my friends, the fact of the matter is that Halton only pays 20% of it. I won't name the chap's name. It and his salary were in the paper, which he's probably not too pleased about. But the chap, whom everybody knows, "was hired by Halton last June to chase down perpetrators of welfare fraud." This is in the Burlington Spectator, Thursday, May 27. "He has found \$485,000 in overpayments by the province and the regional government, according to the report that he has tabled before council." So it is public knowledge and his name is Peter Foulds. I guess everybody knows how much he makes now. Halton's share was \$72,000, more than twice his \$35,000 salary.

People are saying there is fraud and abuse in the system. The ironic thing is that when I sat on the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, we had people come in there—as you know, about 30% of the people who are on social assistance are there through no fault of their own. Whether they're disabled or whatever, they can't work. They were complaining because they don't have enough money to survive because we have too much of the abuse.

So that's just a little bit of an indication. If you read the auditor's report, it will tell you very clearly it's \$600 million or about 10%. But there's a specific example, in a paper in my region of Halton, of where some of the waste and abuse are. So while we're talking about rolling back teachers' salaries and nurses' salaries and doctors and all the municipal employees, I think a lot of them would say, "I would be prepared to take a hit if I don't pick up the paper and see welfare fraud at a cost of"—let's round it off—" \$480,000." That's getting up close to half a million dollars in fraud.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Half a billion.

Mr Carr: No, it's million. One man found almost half a million dollars. The ironic thing is that the 17 prosecutions where there was fraud—so we're not just talking about an error where somebody put an extra zero; there was fraud. They prosecuted it.

Mr Perruzza: So tell us, what would you do?

Mr Carr: This gets around to people and I honestly, truly believe that will stop some of the indications.

My friend asked, "What would you do?" We would adopt a law similar to Quebec's. So this isn't a law that we've dreamed up. Quebec has a law to beef up the authority of welfare review officers to conduct welfare fraud inquiries. I talked about the Halton region. In Quebec, officials have a 75% success ratio. Mr Foulds has been successful in Halton, but in Quebec they have a 75% success ratio. It's already been tried; it isn't something new. You don't have to believe Gary Carr that this is what needs to be done. It's being done in Quebec with a 75% success rate in recovering welfare fraud in the 5,000 cases they reviewed.

Now, obviously, just similar to Mr Foulds, what they do is they look at it and they talk to the front-line workers who tell them there may be some abuse. This man just doesn't go and pick out files. They talk to the front-line workers because they're the ones who give out the cheques, who know where the abuse is. In Quebec, they have a 75% success rate in the 5,000 cases that they looked at with Bill 38.

Interjections.

Mr Carr: My friends opposite, who I'm trying to give some suggestions to, are heckling and carrying on as if this is a terrible thing that we should be catching fraud. I say to the members opposite, the teachers, the doctors, the nurses that you're going to cut back would be willing to do it if they didn't believe that you were wasting in other areas. My goodness, you've got to realize that at the same time you're doing this you can't continue to allow these things to go on. As long as they read headlines that read "\$480,000 In Abuse In The Halton Region," how are you going to get anybody to buy in to this tough piece of legislation?

So I say to my friends, I was going to continue on with some of the other things we would do, but obviously by the heckling they aren't too concerned about what really happens. If they're interested in reading it, they can take a look at our minority report. In fact, it was our minority report before the auditor that was done for the member for Burlington South that went into even more detail of where some of the abuses were.

When I started off I said I had some positive thoughts, and by the heckling it seems like the other side isn't interested in looking at it. I could talk about the 16- and 17-year-olds, and when we told you that you shouldn't get these kids involved in the welfare, you said, "Oh, no, we've got to do it." That's what increased it.

The scary part about the whole situation with the welfare is that when you look at a graph of where it went, even during the 1980s, and for my friends who haven't read the report, you don't even need to actually read it because there's a graph, and if you were to take a look at it, the welfare case loads during the 1980s, when we had a boom period, when we had the highest economic growth of any of the industrialized countries with the exception of Japan, you would have thought the welfare case load would have gone down. It did not; it actually went up.

For my friends, because there are a couple that are interested, who want to take a look at it, this is a list of the welfare case loads and how they went up during the 1980s. They skyrocketed when you went in government, obviously because of the recession, but even during the 1980s they were climbing up, when we had major economic growth. One of the reasons was because we made it easier and easier, fewer controls in place, and I suspect one of the reasons is because we had so much money we didn't need to have the Peter Fouldses of the world come in and discover money because we just produced more. Well, now we have to stop it, and we have to look at these areas. I've given a couple; there are some other areas that we talk about. We talk about the whole expenditure review and how the finances should be put in place.

But let me say right now very clearly that we all realize we're in trouble. Our economy right now is being battered by high taxation, high government spending, high unemployment and low productivity. Our social structures now are stretched to the limit because of the soaring costs in health, education and welfare. The ironic thing is that the more money we put into these things, the worse they get. I said to my constituency office the other day that we pump more money into all these programs, we get more calls. WCB is broke. In the education system we have 30% of the kids dropping out; 30% are functionally illiterate. We pump more into health care; we have more people on waiting lists.

So, quite frankly, to the members of the opposite side, we are never, ever going to be able to control government spending unless we take a hard look at the spending. That's why in your own area we have offered some productive solutions, because we're saying to the people out there, "If we're expecting you to make cuts, if we're expecting you to have pay freezes and rollbacks, you have to be prepared to do it with your government." Over the last little while, I quite frankly don't think that has been done.

So we have offered about six amendments. We talk about a three-year hiring freeze. We honestly, truly believe, as we called it at the time, in the fourth option, that we can reduce compensation by \$2 billion in the third year with a reduction rather than the situation

we're in now, when we're cutting it out right up front. The way to do it is similar to what would happen in a business practice. If we were to have, through attritions, where somebody leaves they had to be replaced by somebody else being more productive, then I honestly, truly believe it would be much easier than having what we're going to have here, which is bang, a whole bunch out of the system, a lot of chaos. I say to the members opposite, you know who they're going to call when the government agencies break down: It is as it is now, the MPP's office.

If it had been done through attrition in the whole broader sector, we could have had an office, when somebody was about to leave because they moved on, they retired, they had another job, they won the lottery, whatever, the people in that department would say: "Joe, Fred, Terri, Cindy is leaving now. We're not going to be able to replace her. How are we going to be more efficient in order to do it?"

This is what has had to happen in the private sector. It's not new. I say to my friends opposite—actually, I guess Randy has left—but the Canadian Auto Workers have had to do this for years. That's how they've got efficient in it.

2000

So it isn't something we've designed in conjunction with the employers. This is what should be done. This is what should be done in terms of the capacity of the government to do it. What we're looking at, rather than some of the quick, knee-jerk reaction, is saying: "If this is what you're going to do in terms of the legislation, could you at least look at some of these other things while we go along? Could we at least look at our own spending in social assistance, in non-profit housing? Could you at least look at scaling down in terms of the Ontario public sector like the Canadian Auto Workers, like Ford has had to do, like General Motors has had to do?"

Because, as you know, in this province today we produce more cars than we did five years ago with fewer people. Quite frankly, it isn't any dramatic management technique that was in there that allowed it. It was because the people on the front lines who were empowered to do the job the way it had been done for 100 years were changed because somebody said, "Why are we doing that?" That needs to happen in the public sector. I don't think it's happening.

Interjections.

Mr Carr: Some of my friends opposite are yelling that it is. I honestly, truly believe it is not. So we are now in a financial crisis where we are basically bankrupt.

Interjections.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Hey, hey, I can't hear him. Be quiet.

Mr Carr: I appreciate the enthusiasm with which my words are greeted on the other side. But all along, for the last two years, we have been constructive. We've attempted to throw a lot of proposals out. We don't expect them all to be listened to because we understand that, for various reasons, you will not. But certainly, over the last two years, as the Premier has said himself, we have credibility because we have offered constructive solutions.

We all came to this House not just to complain and to yell about the government. That would be very easy to do, quite frankly. As my friend from Etobicoke West has often said, criticizing you people is sort of like being the best hockey player in Somalia: It's doesn't take too much. But we want to be constructive. We honestly, truly want to help you, and I hope that the spirit in which these amendments were offered will be the one that will take you to look at them.

I hope it will. I think the Premier believes that. I know the Treasurer believes that. That's why we're offering them. Quite frankly, even if you don't listen, you're going to keep getting them for the next two years because we are trying to put in place a plan which will allow us, when we form the government in 1995, to finally get this government back on track. Quite frankly, as my time runs down, it won't come soon enough. We absolutely, positively have to get our spending under control. We don't believe you're going to do it, but we're going to keep offering solutions. Hopefully the other side's going to start to listen one of these days.

Mr Cousens: I just want to go on record. I think that when you have the kind of presentation that we've just heard, it's the kind of balanced, intelligent statement that shows a tremendous amount of reflection. I think it's hard in politics today. There are so many people who are looking for people to just be so strong-minded and have so many opinions. But rather to search out in a thoughtful, meaningful, caring way the best solution is really where Mr Carr is coming from. Having listened to him during the last period, you go away the wiser.

I think what I'd like to ask the member is, do you feel, with the government proceeding down the way it is, that it is causing considerable confusion within your own communities as far as the municipal level, the teacher level and others, and whether or not they're going to be able to help accommodate the solution through the sectoral agreements that the government is looking for?

We're talking about a negotiation that is extremely difficult. If we're able to see some kind of negotiation where people can come out of this with everybody winning, then you're in a position to have seen progress that we have not seen in Ontario under the leadership of this government. I have sensed, in fact, the very strong

frustration that because things haven't proceeded more quickly, it's getting worse. I'll ask the member to comment.

Mr Perruzza: Just to touch on a couple of points that the former Speaker and my Conservative colleague in this House tried to make earlier, with respect, I quite often get offended when members opposite stand up and pontificate about their ability to crystal-ball gaze. In fact, the member alluded to his prediction abilities when he stood up. I've never heard him distance himself from the kinds of things that his Conservative buddies have done in Ottawa. I never heard him, quite frankly, stand up and distance himself from, for example, the introduction of the GST when the federal Conservative government introduced this massive tax, ripped tens of billions of dollars out of the economy, all to be applied towards the debt.

The point that I try to make in speaking to that is, quite often the Conservative Party—it does this more than anyone else, quite frankly—stands up and tries to explain and describe the kind of responsible fiscal manager it is, but if the truth be known, that party left this province with a debt of around \$40 billion, and the Conservative Party federally, quite frankly, took a debt of \$200 billion and something and doubled it. If that's good fiscal management, then I don't know what it is they're talking about.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): I listened very attentively to the member for Oakville South, and I find it absolutely incredible that the Conservative Party, which I am sure is hearing the same things that I'm hearing in my riding, and every member is—that this government has to be defeated in some way, shape or form; that we shouldn't support anything it's bringing forward, particularly this type of legislation—and the member for Oakville South and the rest of the Conservative Party are saying they're supporting this. What they're supporting is a time bomb.

My leader went through the legislation with the Premier yesterday about the fact that we're going to pay for this down the line three years from now in terms of having to supply days for people who have accumulated them over the period of time while they were off on this holiday that the NDP wants to present. Who's going to pay for the cost of those people who are going to take their place while they're off on these accumulated days?

I find it absolutely incredible that the tax fighters, who have said to the people of Ontario that they are going to fight taxes and fight expenditures and so on, are prepared to support this type of legislation the way they have. It seems to me that maybe some sort of a coalition has been worked out between the NDP and the Conservatives. Perhaps the Conservatives feel that this is not an appropriate time to fight the NDP.

I hear the people in my riding, and I'm sure others in their own ridings hear, "When can we get rid of that

government?" The unfortunate thing about it is these people don't realize that they're around till 1995. So I say to the Conservative Party, you're playing right into their hands. You're about to support a bill that will in fact make you, as tax fighters, look more like wimp fighters. I suggest you get off your butts, look at the bill, understand how it is and decide to do the proper thing on this occasion.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I'd like to congratulate the member for Oakville South in expressing our party's view as to where we believe this province should go to solve some of the great expenditure problems and cost problems that we have.

It is always interesting hearing the member from Brampton South as to what his thoughts are as to where our party is going. At least we have an alternative. The member for Oakville South has put forward an alternative.

All of this financial mess started with the Liberal government. We all made those remarks. We all remember back to the Peterson years and how this province became more taxed than any other jurisdiction, and we watched how this government spent and spent and spent. Of course, then we turned to the New Democratic Party, which started talking about what it's going to do. Remember back on August 19? There was some funny document called *An Agenda for People*.

Mr Stockwell: No.

Mr Tilson: Yes, and what the Premier there said is, "I started this campaign by saying our party would not be presenting an endless catalogue of promises to the people of Ontario, and today I'm putting before the electorate *An Agenda for People*." In fact, he eventually suggests that Ontario should lead a tax revolt.

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Mr Stockwell: A tax revolt?

Mr Tilson: A tax revolt. Well, we've seen what this tax revolt is. We've seen this tremendous budget that's come forward that this province has never seen. I don't know why anybody would ever want to live in this province with the terrible taxes we have.

I'll tell you what they're doing now, and there's no question we do applaud them on one thing. We acknowledge that there's too much government. We do applaud them with that, but the fact of the matter is that they haven't a clue as to how to go about doing it.

The member for Oakville South has been most clear as to where we're going. In fact, when you listen to the New Democratic Party, which said, "Our platform for this election represents a new beginning for Ontario, an agenda for people that begins the work of making our tax system fair," well, I'll tell you, it's the most unfair system that we've ever seen in this country.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Oakville South, you have two minutes.

Mr Carr: The member for Markham talked about frustration. I guess the frustration comes from having presented some alternatives and having the other side just immediately dismiss them.

The member for Yorkview talked about being offended. I tell you what offends me. He talks about crystal ball gazing. We call it planning, we call it vision, not crystal ball gazing. Of course, that member wouldn't know, not having been able to take a look at anything in terms of planning or management style.

He talks about the GST. This is the same member who, with a \$2-billion tax increase from his Treasurer, sat there about five rows over, five rows back, and said nothing. Where were you when the Minister of Finance brought \$2 billion of taxation in? You were silent. You can talk about somebody else. The men in the front row, both of them, are the ones you should be talking about. You should be embarrassed with your record over the tax increases. And, quite frankly, you talk about deficit? We had to count on your hands billions, because you couldn't count up to 10 unless we told you how to do it without your fingers.

For this member to talk about deficits when you've run up the most outrageous deficit over the last little while, you've said nothing to the Treasurer, you've said nothing to the Premier, and you should be embarrassed.

Finally, to the Liberals, the people who say, "Don't increase taxes, don't increase deficits, don't increase spending," you, my friend from Brampton, were there when David Peterson taxed, spent and borrowed like there was no tomorrow. You sat there four rows over, four rows back. You said nothing. You should be disgusted and ashamed. At least we're standing up and offering alternatives. You said nothing for those years.

I'm sick and tired of members in this Legislature who won't stand up to the government. I'll tell you right now, you've got a member who will because I'm elected by the people of Oakville South. That's who I stand up for—not David Peterson, not Floyd Laughren, not Bob Rae—the people of Oakville South. Every time you step out of line, you're going to hear from me.

Hon Brad Ward (Minister without Portfolio in Finance): I would like to add my thoughts to this debate—

Mr Callahan: That should be brief. Thirty seconds, Brad, or what?

Hon Mr Ward: —this enlightening debate, the energetic debate following the member from Brampton. I'd like to say that I may not take up my full half hour because I like to be clear and concise in my statements and then sit down. I'll express my views as well as I can and I hope that the House will give me the respect that I show them when they express their views during debate.

I'd like to look at the bigger picture here rather than

focus simply on Bill 48 and the social contract, although I will turn to that later on in my presentation. I think we all know that we've gone through the worst recession since the 1930s in the province of Ontario, that we've lost over 320,000 jobs over the last two and a half years since the recession started to take hold in late 1989 and 1990, and that we suffered three quarters of all the job losses in Canada in that period. As a government, we made a decision shortly after our election to battle the recession to the best of our ability.

We realize that you can't spend your way out of the recession, but there are things you can do to cushion the economic blows that working people are facing. We tried to do those things. I would hate to think how bad it would have been if we had not maintained our commitment to capital projects and improving our transportation links and providing short-term work for people. I would hate to think how bad it would have been if we had not provided our initiatives in affordable housing, which the members opposite criticize, providing affordable housing for the people of Ontario and, again, creating short-term work for our skilled trades, much-needed work during the great recession of 1990-92.

We ran deficits. We ran record deficits: \$10 billion, first budget and second budget, but I'm not defensive about that, because I think during tough economic times, it's important for governments to try to stimulate the economy as much as it can when the private sector is unwilling or unable to. At the same time, as a government, we always said that when recovery would begin to take hold, we would deal with those deficits. And recovery has taken hold. The province of Ontario has created around 100,000 jobs over the last six to eight months.

Mr Tilson: Things have never been so good. Boy, these are good times. What a party. Ring out the good times.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Ward: It's a fragile recovery. I know the opposition doesn't like to hear this, but it's a recovery none the less. It's export driven; it's not consumer driven. Economic indicators, fragile and bumpy as it is, are still showing positive economic growth.

Mr Stockwell: I can't stand the prosperity.

Mr Tilson: This is wonderful.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I would ask the members please to remain calm. The member for Brantford has the floor. You had your turn; it's his turn.

Hon Mr Ward: As a government, we made a very tough decision. We said that when recovery is going to take hold, we will deal with the deficit. If we had done nothing, we would have been facing a \$17-billion deficit for this fiscal year. We said, "No, during recovery we have to get the deficits on a downward trend so

eventually you can have an operating surplus," and that's what we did with the budget that we brought out. We brought the deficit into a downward trend, so that by the year 1998, we should have an operating surplus. But to do that, we had to make tough decisions. We had to make decisions that we think the people of Ontario were looking for, the leadership that was necessary.

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If the junior Minister of Finance is going to drop these pearls of wisdom, I think there should be a quorum to hear them.

The Deputy Speaker: Table, would you please check if there is a quorum.

Acting Table Clerk (Ms Lisa Freedman): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is now present. The member for Brantford.

Hon Mr Ward: We made some tough decisions with the budget. We said we wanted to have a fair and balanced approach to battling the recession, to sustain the fragile recovery. To do that, we took three steps: We increased taxes, yes; we cut expenditures, yes, \$4 billion—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Please take your seats. If you want a conversation, do it outside the House, please.

Hon Mr Ward: For the first time since 1942, program expenditure reduction occurred in the province of Ontario in cost. And yes, the third component was the social contract with our broader public sector partners, 950,000. We took this fair and balanced approach because we felt it was important for all sectors and individuals to contribute to getting the deficit down.

The taxes that we increased we think were as fair as possible. We could have increased the sales tax if we wanted to, but we didn't. We broadened it, but we didn't increase it. We increased the income tax by three points because income tax is the fairest tax system we have in the province of Ontario. It's not perfect, it can be made better, but it is the fairest tax we have because it's based on ability to pay.

We said the upper 10% income earners in the province of Ontario, because they have a little bit more ability to pay, should make a bigger contribution, and we increased the surtax on them. We said corporations that are making a profit, that may not be paying income tax, should, and a corporate minimum tax will be brought in in January 1994.

On the expenditure side, we tried to ensure that the most vulnerable were protected as we made our expenditure reductions, and we did that to the best of our ability, and we went to our broader sector partners and

we said, "Sit down with us in a fair and open fashion, negotiate with us, help us find creative solutions to reducing the wage compensation that is in the public sector."

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Although some people look at the sectoral negotiations that took place as a failure, I don't, because there were some good ideas expressed at the table, some creative solutions that should be examined in greater detail, and although as it proceeded, near the end the coalition of the unions found it necessary to walk out, I'm confident that come August 1 you're going to see some sectoral agreements, some local agreements between employers-employees-our government that will find solutions, that will prevent layoffs and service cuts in the province of Ontario. We did this in a fair and balanced approach, as I said, to the best of our ability.

And, sure, people don't like tax increases, no one does, but if they're fair, if they go to effective and efficient services and people see the downward trend in the deficit, it's my opinion that although they may be a little bit mad now, in the long term they're going to say, "Okay, we can live with that." And the expenditure reductions, as long as the most vulnerable are protected, the people of Ontario are going to say: "Okay, we can live with maybe a little bit longer lineup in certain areas. Maybe we didn't really need that one service. Maybe it was a good idea to rationalize some of the bureaucracies."

When we look at the social contract, Bill 48 and the fail-safe items, I look at it and I say, what other government in Canada, when they're dealing with their public sector, would say, "Yes, we recognize that there are hardships on the working poor, people making less than \$30,000, and we're going to exempt them"? What other government would say, "We may have an opportunity to take advantage of some surpluses in the pension without infringing on the entitlement of people who want that pension as they retire, make creative use of that money to prevent even more layoffs or provide a greater retirement incentive"? What other government would take job security in a serious fashion and set up a fund, \$300 million over three years, to top up public sector workers who unfortunately may be forced into a surplus situation, a layoff? What other government would say there should be a redeployment list by region so that if there is a layoff in one hospital and there's an opening, for whatever reason, in another hospital, they should be considered for that job? I can't think of any other government that would have that much consideration for their employees. Other governments wouldn't care about their workers; they would simply lay them off. "Good luck." Throw them to the wolves.

It's because of these aspects of the social contract that I am so confident that we're going to sit down at the tables, locally, sectorally, reach consensus, agree-

ments, and come August 1, we're going to reach our target of \$2 billion in reduction without the undue hardship that may be experienced in other provinces.

With that, as I said, I would be as clear and concise as I can. I brought the broader picture into perspective here, I hope, looking at where we've been over the last two and a half years battling the recession, why we had to make the tough decisions we did with this budget, the three components, a fair and balanced approach and our sincere effort to work with the employees and employers in the broader public sector to help us work together to find creative solutions.

Mr Callahan: I was enthralled by the speech from the member for Brantford. It's interesting, he sort of plays this almost to violins, but I really don't think you got the message across to those people that you're going to short-circuit, whose jobs you could have saved by doing a number of things. If your Minister of Finance had not had Keynesian economics, where he wanted to spend his way out by giving large increases to them to begin with, we wouldn't be in this pickle.

In addition to that, if you bothered to collect any of the debts that are outstanding in this province, \$125 million I saw in public accounts through the auditor that have not been collected on family benefits that are either paid through fraud or mistakes, instead of having it done through some wacko collection agency you've got in your government that can only collect 10% of that account, and in fact it costs 20% to keep that ministry or whatever they are in place to collect the 10%, so in fact you're 20% below the line; if you in fact believed that there was any possibility that the private sector could help you out and didn't have this all-encompassing view that the government, this ideological thing that the NDP has that the public sector can do everything and the private sector is a bunch of junk, and if you didn't have this belief that the way to do it is to tax, tax, tax, tax—Well, I have to tell the member from Brantford that I don't know where you've been. You certainly haven't been around this House to hear some of the comments that have been made, you certainly have not been listening to your constituents and you are certainly deserting every principle that the NDP, as I remember it since 1985, ever stood for. So I have to tell you that if you think this is such a marvelous act, I hope you read it, I hope you've discussed it with your constituents and I hope you understand the implications of it, because it's a time bomb that's ticking, and it's going to tick for the people of Ontario. Three years from today, the debt will be even worse. When we take over government in this province, it will be a disaster.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Further questions and/or comments. The honourable member for York Mills.

Mr Turnbull: I just want to point out some of the

absolute inaccuracies of what the member for Brantford has been speaking about. I turn to page 86 of your budget. Since you're the junior Minister of Finance, I presume you would have one with you. You talked in your speech about program expenditures being down for the first time since the 1940s. That's absolutely inaccurate, and, as Winston Churchill said, it's a terminological inexactitude, because, according to your own budget, there is \$805 million that you've taken off-book, and in addition to that there's \$600 million that you're going to get school boards to borrow because they have some borrowing capacity.

The reality is that this government is suddenly beginning to wake up to some of the fiscal realities, due to the fact that the bond agencies are simply saying, "Fellas, we may not be able to roll over your debt when it comes due," because the reality is that an awful lot of the bonds that were issued by this government earlier this year have not been taken up. They are in the treasuries of those organizations which distribute it for you. Unless they can move it, they will not roll over any more debt. So don't come with that kind of nonsense.

Also, don't come with the nonsense that you have a corner on compassion for workers, because it was under the Conservative government in this province that the best labour legislation in North America was passed, and I've talked to union leaders who have told me that, and you know that if you are telling the truth.

Start telling the people what really is the case: You've taken \$1.4 billion out of the equation, and that's extra spending. You have not reduced your spending. It is absolutely untrue.

2030

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I do hope to have an opportunity to speak on this bill, and intend to, before we finish the debate. The only comment I want to make here this evening, and I want to make it as clear as I can, is simply that a fairness exists in this House, and I'll accept all of my responsibilities for my days, including in opposition. I want to say that short presentation just made by my colleague the member for Brantford was one of the more reasoned and thoughtful presentations made in this House. It obviously came from the heart, with some belief.

Mr Turnbull: It's a great shame it wasn't true.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I don't think there was any doubt about that and I am prepared to say that I accept the statements. I think they are true and I don't think that's the argument that should be made.

Mr Turnbull: Read the budget. It's inescapable.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Mackenzie: There's real arrogance and ignorance in this House. What we had was a very

reasoned approach that came from the heart, that clearly indicated somebody who had thought this out, a very difficult situation. I'm surprised there's anybody in this House who cannot recognize that kind of accuracy and commitment on the part of my colleague from Brantford.

Mr Stockwell: The difficulty I have when I hear the junior minister of Finance is exactly the points he's trying to put across as accurate statements. If this budget is your budget and it's your defensible budget, then so be it. I'm not one to tell you how to write a budget, because I doubt you'd listen anyway. The point I'm making is this: Those statements you made are fundamentally inaccurate. I don't care whether the Minister of Labour wants to stand up and continue the pretence that these are accurate statements.

If you want to say that for every dollar you increased the budget you cut four, go ahead and say it, but it's not true. The fact of the matter is that what you cut—I'll prove it to you—was spending you were thinking of making, spending you were planning to make. You had never made it; it was never made in any year. You were planning to make that expenditure, and then you said, "Okay, no, we won't," so you're classifying that as a cut. That's not a cut; that's just spending you didn't make last year and you didn't make this year.

The other point you must deal with is that you did move \$800 million off-book and you did move \$600 million to Education. That's \$1.4 billion. When you add up total to total, you spent more. I will say this: You didn't spend a lot more, but you did spend more. You didn't spend as much as you did in previous years, but you did spend more.

If this budget is defensible, I challenge the government to defend it. But don't fabricate the numbers. They're simply not there. I make one last appeal, both to the Treasurer and to the junior minister. You do yourselves no service, no service at all, by pretending you made cuts that you didn't make and that you didn't move stuff off-book that you did, because any grade schooler can see through that argument.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Brantford has two minutes to make a response.

Hon Mr Ward: For the people opposite who say we didn't make any cuts, it's too bad they weren't with us that weekend at the Metropolitan Toronto Convention Centre when we went through the most gruelling weekend to find \$2.4 billion in cuts that we knew were going to have an impact on the people of Ontario. It was very difficult.

I get sick and tired of people saying this government's lost its way in representing the working people, because what other government in North America has come in with an employee wage protection fund? You talk to the American health care workers with access to

that fund when their employer simply walked away. What other government in North America has brought in as progressive labour legislation as the Minister of Labour has and raised the minimum wage to one of the highest in North America for the working poor? We have not lost our way. We are marching in the right direction: fiscal responsibility in a caring and compassionate way that this government must proceed with and will proceed with over the next two years.

Mrs Sullivan: As I start my remarks on the social contract legislation, I want to regret that time is limited. I understand that government members are speaking less than the full 30 minutes they are allowed. But I feel that this is significantly important legislation that takes the province down a very different path than it has embarked upon in the past, and I want to address three areas in particular, one of them being the concept of a social contract itself, how we got into this position; secondly, the impact of this particular legislation and the companion legislation from the Ministry of Health on our health care services and delivery. I want to speak in a limited way but to bring the concerns of my own local community to the floor. Then I would like to conclude with a discussion of an approach to change in expectations of government in the province.

In reviewing the whole concept of social contract discussions, I think one of the most interesting and full discussions of social contract itself was presented by Mr Solomon Barkin in the *Journal of Economic Issues* in June 1977, and I commend that article to you. He talks about a social contract as being the most far-reaching new instrument in industrial relations, a term borrowed from the British and involving comprehensive wages and income agreements and Labour Party-trade union centre agreements on public economic and social policy. He says there is a parallel in seven other European countries—Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden—and goes on to talk about the development of social contract approaches in Italy and in other European countries.

I commend that article to anyone who is looking at the entire social contract issue, because it spelled out for me several things: the difference in the economies and in the structure of our workplace; the difference in our union-management relations and the entire working arrangement between unions and management in Ontario; the different ratios of unionized workers in those countries where a social contract has been put into place. Those issues are important to bring to the table here, because basically what's happened is that we have a government which latterly, and indeed too late, recognized that it had led the province into difficult economic circumstances and attempted to integrate an approach from another jurisdiction that it had not completely thought out. I think that is a singular part of the problem that we are facing today in the context of

this legislation.

The next step in terms of bringing the concept of a social contract to Canada occurred in Manitoba and, lo and behold, one of the singular leadership individuals who was involved in the early 1980s in Manitoba was Michael Decter, who happened to be very much involved in the social contract negotiations here, and as you know, sat at the head of the table for the government.

I refer you to an article by Dian Cohen and Kristin Shannon, both of whom are very interesting commentators on public policy; indeed, Kristin Shannon is a person whose work I personally know and respect. They wrote, in chapter 13 of a book called *The Next Canadian Economy*, in 1984, about the experiments in restraint involving the public sector in two provinces: British Columbia and Manitoba.

In the early 1980s British Columbia adopted a win-lose model, a confrontation route. Indeed, that was adopted and the ultimate effect of that was ongoing distrust and difficulties between the government and the labour movement within the public sector. That continued right up until the present. Only recently did British Columbia attempt to move into a new facet and form of bargaining. Indeed, that entire approach, which was one of the bases on which this experiment was based, failed. It failed before this government began to move in this direction. Surely the model should have been looked at.

I want to talk about the Manitoba model, because the problems there were very interesting problems, quite similar to those here: booming public expenditures, a restrained economy and revenues that were in decline. But I should point out to you that the Manitoba social contract involved very simple negotiations for a very limited amount of money with very limited impact on the public sector. The Manitoba negotiations that Michael Decter was involved in, as he was then, as secretary to cabinet and clerk of the executive council, called for voluntary reductions of a total of \$10 million. That amounted to about \$600 per person and the Manitoba government employees union was the single union. There was only one union involved in those discussions.

2040

Unfortunately, what this government has done—and I believe that in its selection of Michael Decter as the head of the government negotiations, it believed that Ontario was Manitoba writ large, or someone, perhaps Mr Decter himself, convinced the government that Ontario was Manitoba writ large. People who look around this province know that our province is far more complex, and that the relationships in our labour negotiations and in our collective agreements are far broader and far more demanding.

There is a leadership of labour culture that means that

within the labour movement itself, a strong supportive role is required of union leadership and that cannot be shown in a giving-in mode. The government did not understand either the psychology or the complex nature of labour relations here when it adopted a model that was used in a far simpler situation in Manitoba, and in a situation where the goals were significantly different than they were in Ontario.

The other issue I want to bring to the table with respect to the Manitoba negotiations is the very question of goals. In Manitoba, the goals were expressed fully and clearly to the public sector and to the public. First of all, the government of the day wanted labour settlements that would not worsen the structural deficit, and it wanted to free money to reduce unemployment. Those issues have not been put on the table here with any clarity.

Unfortunately, we are in a situation now where there is clear chaos, where there is clear antipathy and anger with respect to the approach that government has taken, both from the employer side and from the employee side, and I feel that is singularly distressing in terms of the issues this province faces with respect to change over the next period of time.

If I can, I'd just like to read a portion of an editorial from the Windsor Star, which talks about some of the issues of the confusion surrounding the development of the social contract in Ontario. This is an editorial that appeared on June 16 and says:

"If you understand the terms of the NDP's social contract, congratulations. That puts you head and shoulders above most public sector union leaders, their 950,000 members and the pundits attempting to sort through this mess.

"Trying to figure out just what Premier Bob Rae has in mind is like trying to explain the origins of the universe. We know he wants to trim \$2 billion from the public payroll and we know he introduced legislation this week that will freeze wages for three years if civil servants won't agree to negotiate the cuts themselves. The legislation is retroactive to June 14 and runs until March 31, 1996.

"But nobody from the government side seems to be doing a very good job of explaining just what that means. Should union leaders assume, for instance, that any collective agreements signed, sealed and delivered before this week stand and all wage freezes are based on that existing contract, or will Rae abrogate more than 8,000 collective agreements and start from scratch? The only thing clear is that not all the unions are willing to go back to the table and that virtually guarantees another failure.

"The exasperation felt by the public service is now being shared by the private sector but for entirely different reasons. With transfer payments to municipal-

ities, hospitals and school boards scheduled to be cut July 1, and with taxpayers facing record provincial tax increases from then until the end of the year, they expect the government to step in and do something.

"Instead, Rae has put the onus on local leaders to come up with a game plan, enticing them to the table by promising to lower the cutback ante if they can just come up with a deal. At the same time, he's threatened to punish unions that won't bargain by denying them access to a \$300-million job security fund. That isn't negotiation; that is blackmail, and it's mighty poor leadership any way you look at it.

"Public sector costs have to be cut. On this much we agree. What we can't abide is a Premier who prolongs the agony and animosity when he should have imposed immediate wage freezes after talks failed. It was his job and he didn't do it."

I think that is quite a succinct picture of what the public issues are associated with the aftermath of the failed social contract talks, and I commend again to you that article because it reflects the kinds of reports that we are hearing and seeing from every place in the province.

I bring your attention to an article from today's Hamilton Spectator quoting Brian McCormick, president of the Niagara district council of CUPE, who spent yesterday, it says, trying to find out how contracts will be reopened and whether non-unionized government workers face the same cutbacks. He wants to know how much his employer has to cut from its budget.

The Spectator quotes Mr McCormick: "I am not alone in my confusion. We're waiting to hear exactly what does this mean. I have a lot of questions."

That kind of chaos and that kind of confusion is extant through not only the union sector but through the employer sector as well. The employer sector has not yet received its targets in all of the areas, and those targets may well change from those which were on the table at the social contract talks at the Royal York, because in fact the base for bargaining has changed, given that the figures for the low wage cutoff are now \$5,000 per person different than those which were on the table at the social contract talks.

I want to move to an area that I think was a warning that was presented when the government presented its first paper. On April 5, the Premier said, "If we can't achieve a new social contract that adjusts our public sector compensation costs, the alternatives are sobering: yet higher taxes and deeper expenditure cuts." That's what we've got, and as we look at what the principles were that were put on the table at that time, I think we should look and see what the government has brought to the table now and what the effect of that will be.

One of the issues which the government indicates is a principle for the social contract talks is a protection of

public sector jobs, and the issue of job security is one that has been addressed by several members in discussing the bill that's before us. I want to talk to you about some of the decisions that have been faced, by example, in the public sector, not just this year but in the past, and in fact to look at hospital services and how over a period of several years there has been significant downsizing of beds and of the days in hospital for persons across the province.

There has been improvement and we, along with the Minister of Health and her former colleague and the Minister of Health before that, commend the hospitals for the very serious downsizing and restructuring exercise they have been going through from 1987 to 1993. In 1987, the days in hospital per 1,000 population were 1,117; today they are 840.

The impact of that kind of a change has been significant in terms of the workers in the hospitals, in terms of the restructuring, the redeployment in terms of employment. In my community, there are many people who have been displaced from services in hospitals who have had no place else to go, because we have not seen an increase in community-based services that will take those highly trained individuals.

2050

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): That's not quite true.

Mrs Sullivan: In my community it's certainly true, and in most communities in Ontario. I defy the Treasurer to prove differently.

Those positions are not in place. Indeed, as we look at the expenditure cuts that are proposed by the government, we see in the long-term care area, where the former Minister of Health indicated there would be a substantial redeployment of hospital personnel, a cut of \$1 billion, with no indication of how that money will be redeployed, what terms are going to be placed on the long-term care sector, what stealing will be done from public health services and so on.

It's in your expenditure cuts, Treasurer, and I refer you to them.

Hon Mr Laughren: Your language is unfortunate.

Mrs Sullivan: My language is appropriate to the issue. For those who are at home and cannot understand what's happening here, the Treasurer is seated immediately in front of me and to my right and perhaps does not understand some of the issues that are associated here.

Mr Stockwell: Hey, listen, Barbara, a few years ago he would have been to your left.

Mrs Sullivan: I'm told that a few years ago he would have been to my left.

The issue of the targets per sector of the social contract legislation is interesting, because if you look at the numbers of employees in the health care sector, you

will see that in hospitals there are now 164,800 employees. That includes everyone from nurses to orderlies to cleaning staff to administrators. Through OHIP there are payments to physicians, to health services organizations, to commercial laboratories. There are payments, through the drug benefit plan, to pharmacies and oxygen suppliers, and, through the assistive devices program, to those people who provide aids to people who are disabled.

In emergency health there are 5,300 employees. In long-term care 25,000 staff in nursing homes will be affected by this legislation, 18,000 staff in homes for the aged, 11,000 staff in home care and 5,200 in community support services. In community health care there are close to 10,000 people who will be affected. There will be people affected in other sectors as well.

I think that any one of the organizations and the unions involved would say that the workers, as well as management in virtually every one of those areas, have over the past four years evidenced a willingness to restructure and to enter into that restructuring situation.

But I think that when we look, by example, at the hospital sector and do some calculations, we can see the kind of difficulties that sector will face. The cutoff that the government has agreed to with respect to no effect on employees is a \$30,000 income level. In hospitals that means that 54% of the workers will not be affected by this social contract legislation. What that also means, however, because the target that is being provided to hospitals is \$253 million, is that the 75,000 remaining workers must take the hit of the \$253 million. The effect of that hit is \$3,300 per person in a hospital setting.

Some hospitals have gone through a restructuring that has placed as much downsizing as the community can take at this time. There are no adequate home care alternatives. There are inadequate community-based alternatives to hospital care. Hospitals have, as I've indicated, decreased in-hospital days significantly over the past four years and are now moving to 70% of their case load being handled through day surgery, and that is something to be applauded. None the less, how are those other workers going to be able to take the hit on them that is now being demanded by government when they have already been asked to take an additional cut for hospitals of \$160 million? Of that, \$50 million will come from the Ministry of Health base, \$10 million from eliminating the hospital incentive fund and a \$100-million reduction in one-time funding. In total, through the expenditure cuts and the social contract cuts, hospitals are being asked to take a 9% cut in their operating expenditures, amounting to \$1.6 billion this year—very difficult, and every community in Ontario is going to be asking if our medicare promises will be maintained when that kind of impact is felt on only one sector, in only one portion of the health care sector.

The OMA also, the physicians in our province, have enormous concerns, and I think members of this House will be aware of those concerns, as they were presented very publicly in the past few days.

But I wanted to indicate to you, and I applaud, the working relationship that the OMA had through the joint management committee whereby \$980 million worth of cost savings had been achieved through the framework agreement which was signed two years ago. That framework agreement was one that I indeed had some reservations about when it came into effect, but in fact it appears to have been working.

One of the issues that I want to put on the table is that with the cuts that have been put forward in expenditure controls, one of the most important new vehicles for analysing and predicting change, the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences, ICES, which works under the auspices of the OMA joint management committee and has more than 50 projects under way, may well be in jeopardy.

The work of that institute is singularly important, it seems to me, for long-term planning. The first major report is due in September that will identify practice patterns of physicians across the province. That will be a report that physicians themselves will want to review and where expert advice should be brought to the table to in fact learn how appropriately to restructure health services delivery and medical care delivery.

Unfortunately, what we have seen, and I want to move quickly because I see my time is running out, is the Minister of Health's companion legislation to the social contract bill, which is indeed draconian, and I suggest that this bill to implement the government's expenditure control plan in the health care field breaches two aspects of the Canada Health Act: the accessibility provisions, which require that reasonable compensation be provided through negotiated agreements, and the universality provisions, which require that people have equivalent access to health care services in whatever area of the province.

My view is that medicare is now being torn apart and torn asunder in Ontario with the provisions of this bill, and the sections of the bill, and I refer every member of the House to them, because frankly if you care about medicare, you should be looking this up, are subsections 7(a), (b), (c) and (d). Please look at those. Medicare is going out the window with those sections.

The second issue is that as a result of this bill, the government will have the right to unilaterally reduce payments, reduce services, tell patients the number of times they may receive services, where they may receive services and what services they may receive, whether or not there is any relationship to the need for those services from a health care point of view. That is not what medicare was set up to do. Medicare was set up to be a protection and to ensure that there was

adequate, clear, open, even, equitable access to medical and hospital services, and this bill destroys that.

But furthermore, the bill, in assuming and in ensuring that the Minister of Health has the unilateral authority to make these changes, means that people may in fact not receive the treatment they need unless they pay for it extra. What we are going to need to know is if with this bill the Minister of Health intends what the legislation will in fact result in: a two-tier medical system where, when the Minister of Health says the government will no longer pay, people will have to pay out of their own pockets. The question is, what happens to the poor and the weak and the vulnerable when they can't pay?

This legislation is a clear breach of the Canada Health Act. It destroys medicare. I can't imagine being more upset about any other piece of legislation than I am about that one, and I hope that every member of this government will look at that piece of legislation and say no, this cannot happen.

2100

In the few minutes I have left, I want to turn to my own municipality and talk about the kinds of cuts and the approaches that have been taken there.

In Halton, the list we have received from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs indicates that some \$6,147,541 will be cut from the regional and municipal governments. We do not yet have targets that have been set for cuts in other areas. I suggest, by example, that the impact on GO train services, on integrated transportation services, on our own hospitals and on other public services that are delivered in the community, including library services, are yet unknown.

At the municipal level, people are certainly going to be affected, whether it's in the provision of parks and recreation services this summer or bylaw enforcement or waste management or in public health services, and those issues are very clear already. Sheridan College, located in my riding, will face cuts in its administration and other budgets, and students already know that many of them will not have access to post-secondary education this fall as a result of these issues.

The difficulty, I think, with the approach the government has taken is that there has been an impossibility of planning in an appropriate, analytical way to downsize, restructure, reorganize and redeploy government services. I think there would be less animosity, less confusion and less chaos if the government had taken a modicum of time to do that preparation.

I have a document from the Ontario Hospital Association that I want to refer to, although given limited time to address the issue. It describes the restructuring process that the OHA went through as it had to deal with change within the hospitals across Ontario. They developed a plan and they talked about how people should be retrained, the retraining programs that should

be available, how they should be redeployed and how the easement from one job into another should be made. They also made the point that to put into effect that kind of very important, vital program was a process of more than two years. I refer you to that document. It's included in the OHA proposals on the social contract agreements which went to the social contract tables. It's one that I think is valuable, and the Health minister and indeed the Finance minister should also have a look at the time lines that such a process of change takes.

As I conclude, I want to underline that in my view we should not be afraid of change in our society and we should not be afraid of change in the way government services are delivered. Unfortunately, what we should be afraid of and what we should be fearful of is change when adequate planning and analysis have not been put into place before the change takes place.

I suggest to you that if ICES is threatened, that is a clear signal that this government is going to continue to expect to implement unilateral actions without the appropriate planning in the health care sector, and I submit that will be, as well, a signal of its approach in any other area.

Mr Carr: I appreciate the opportunity to share a few thoughts on the member's speech. She went through quite a few of the circumstances of what we're facing in the health care field. I know the time is short because we only have a half an hour, and when you spend the time it takes to criticize the government, you can go well over a half-hour. But, hopefully, in the debate we're also going to get some of the solutions, what we should be doing.

I know my friend Mr Wessinger, the member for Simcoe Centre, has spent a great deal of time going around this province on health care. I suspect he got a great deal of criticism about what we're doing but not too many solutions.

It's interesting to note that the Minister of Health is here. Once she took over that portfolio, it probably took a few short weeks until the pot bubbled over. The former minister had it contained, there weren't too many crises, and the new minister immediately gets over there and the pot starts bubbling over. She's not in there more than about four weeks, and all of a sudden we've got talk about a two-tier health care system, that you're only going to be able to go if you have a kid with an earache. It was almost like what happened in the Environment field during that period of time. I don't know whether she just happens to be at the wrong place at the right time or vice versa, but she seems to get right in there.

I hope what will happen over the next little while is that some of the people who have some ideas in the health care system, rather than going on for a tremendous time about the problems, will enlighten us on some of the solutions, because that's the old politics. Any-

body can stand up here and criticize. What we need are some solutions. I hope members on the other side, some of whom weren't here during my speech, will take it in that spirit and I hope all members will reflect. We've got a crisis, but we need to have solutions. We don't need more criticism. Quite frankly, we can get that from anybody.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'd like to comment briefly, because I appreciated the remarks of the member for Halton Centre. I'd like to pick up on the fact that as she ended, she said we all recognize that there is a need for change. I'm glad to hear her say that, because there are times in this House when one gets the impression from the members opposite that they believe that everything was just fine in the health care system five years, 10 years ago, and that therefore we should not change anything. I think the member for Halton Centre was acknowledging that in fact over the past decade there have been numerous reports, analyses, committees, that have said it is necessary to reform our health care system.

She also spoke about the need to reform it in the context of a plan, and that is precisely what this government, from the beginning of its term, set out to do and is accomplishing. For the first time now, we have in this province a comprehensive vision of the kind of health care system we want to build. We have set out the goals that will take us towards that health care system.

What we have always lacked in this province are the tools to manage the health care system or in fact even to create a system which one then tries to manage, and that's what we're doing. Nobody before has ever had an agreement with the OMA, and regrettably, the agreement that was signed is one that gives us very slow time frames in which to change the system and manage it.

As a result of the fiscal constraints that this government is facing, we are working more quickly than I suspect we would have done were it not for this crisis, but we are not doing anything different from what we have recognized for many years needs to be done, that we've done very effectively with the hospital system and that we have to do with the system as a whole if we are to protect and preserve our cherished health care system.

Mr Stockwell: That speech may well have been given by Frank Miller maybe 10 years ago.

Hon Mrs Grier: Before or after he cut a hospital unilaterally?

Mr Stockwell: Oh, here we go with the minister talking about cutting hospitals. Only yesterday did you make the announcement that you yourself were going to make hospital cuts in Metropolitan Toronto. Don't shake your head. That's what you said. You're contemplating cuts in hospitals in Metropolitan Toronto, between one and 10.

When this party was in power in 1982, trying to take these apparent necessary steps, why was your party, in opposition, fighting it every step of the way? Why? Because when they were on this side of the House, they had no responsibility to the taxpayers, no responsibility for what they said, and they took no responsibility for the finances of this province.

Pardon me, Madam Minister, for standing up here and listening to what you say and reminding you of your checkered history when it comes to cost reductions, fiscal responsibility and hospital closings.

I myself no longer want to hear dissertations or lectures from this minister about fiscal responsibility and hospital closings, knowing your party's checkered past when any government tried to rein in costs on any program for any service in this province, because you opposed them every step of the way. In fact, every policy you undertook in opposition decried any government for not spending enough on everything. Pardon me, I'm as cynical as the population, because what you said is not what you're doing.

2110

Mr Cousens: It's as if the Liberals can come into the House and forget history. They're revisionists of the first order, because when you look at where they stood when they were in power, they had a tax-and-spend policy and they just plowed ahead in spite of all the warnings that the government and the people were not ready for the continued high spending habits of David Peterson and Bob Nixon. The highest budget ever in the province of Ontario before Floyd Laughren was the one brought in by Mr Nixon, and there were the 33 taxes that were brought in by the Liberals. The whole history of the Liberal Party in Ontario is one where, when they were in power, they did something quite different from now what their members would say they'd do when they were in opposition.

I just wish there was some kind of way in which we could cause the Liberal members to remember what it is they were a part of when they were in power. I realize the honourable member wasn't in cabinet at the time, so therefore wasn't totally responsible. The cabinet would come along and report what it was going to do and then like trained seals they would just clap and then support it. That's very much what's happening within a good part of the New Democratic caucus. Fortunately, there are a few people there who are waking up and breaking ranks and thinking for themselves.

But the true problem now in our province is that the Liberals have not come forward with any concrete resolutions or suggestions. They are standing up by themselves and just criticizing. They're not even prepared to give some credit where credit is due. It's so much easier just to keep slamming and criticizing and trying to tear down.

I believe we've got real problems to get this govern-

ment to shape up and revise the legislation so that it's going to be something that is really going to meet the high intentions that it has talked of, but in the meantime, every person that's part and parcel of this Legislature has to contribute to the solution rather than the problem.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Halton Centre has two minutes to make a response.

Mrs Sullivan: I want particularly to respond to the comments of the Minister of Health, because I think her remarks place a context that I was trying to bring forward in this debate.

She talked about a plan and the tools. I was addressing many of those issues. What concerns me, however, is that this government also talks about partnerships and its partners. I am very concerned that what it looks for and is demanding now is silent partners.

She talked about a plan that's in place, and indeed there is a framework that is a continuation of a framework for health care development that began, I think, to be implemented, not only by the last government but in certain instances by the government before that. However, I am deeply concerned that this plan is jeopardized by some of the actions that have been taken that are unilateral, that are arbitrary, that have taken place in the context of no consultation.

I am deeply concerned that ICES, as I have mentioned, and the work of ICES may be jeopardized by the antipathy and the antagonism and the unilateral decision-making of the government with respect to the OMA agreement and the expenditure controls, and the discussion and policy included in the bill.

The restructuring of our hospitals community: The minister made an announcement yesterday that involved the district health council, and that I applaud, because more than the Ministry of Health and bureaucrats are going to be at that table. I think that is a valid approach and it's one that should be emulated.

The decisions must not be made in isolation, however. They must not be made in an arbitrary fashion and that's what everyone in the health care sector is now objecting to.

The Acting Speaker: I would say to the honourable members that in regard to the two minutes that they have to make comments or questions—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. I would say to the honourable members that in regard to the comments and questions period that we have after debate is given, focus should be placed upon the person who made the remarks in that half-hour preceding. Too often, what ends up happening is debate in the two minutes that are used by the honourable members. That's not the purpose of having this time. That's why it's called "questions and comments."

Further debate? The member for Dufferin-Peel.

Mr Tilson: This is the order for second reading of Bill 48, which I'd like to read to the members and those who are watching these proceedings. I'll read the title. It's called, "An Act to encourage negotiated settlements in the public sector to preserve jobs and services while managing reductions in expenditures and to provide for certain matters related to the Government's expenditure reduction program."

I think that when all of us listen to our constituents, no matter what political stripe we're of, all our constituents are saying that there is too much government, too much of everything. Do we need all the municipal government, provincial government, school board government, hydro government, federal government and all the many commissions and crown corporations we have that simply control our lives and give us all kinds of regulations, most of which we don't understand? The answer to that is no, we don't.

Having said that, I think we should applaud the government for at least making an effort to reverse that process. We, contrary to the Liberals—because it's very easy. I found when I first came to this place, and still now, that the easiest thing in the world is to criticize. It's a piece of cake to criticize this government and it's a piece of cake to criticize this legislation. The Liberals are doing it, the last speaker did it, we do it and I think in your own caucus you're probably doing it yourselves.

The trick is to put forward an alternative, and that's what a proper opposition party should do, not only to provide criticism but to provide constructive criticism and an alternative plan. It has been reiterated as to what our plan is in the Progressive Conservative Party. It's been reiterated by several of our members and I will be doing that in the half-hour that I'm allowed to give the presentation.

Certainly, when you read the title alone, "An Act to encourage negotiated settlements," that isn't what the union leaders are saying. They're saying it's absolute blackmail. It's rather amazing for a party, the New Democratic Party, which in the past has been connected to the union movement—many of you have been heads of various union groups—and it's an astounding process. I don't even know what the words "social contract" mean, at least what your definition of "social contract" means. Obviously, I assume the word came from a French philosopher, but I somehow doubt that what you say is a social contract and what Mr Rousseau said was a social contract are the same thing, because what you're doing is that you're breaching the contracts of your various supporters.

Hard negotiating has been done through the unions and the business people to reach agreements for various benefits and various wage agreements, and yet you're going to say: "Sorry; we made a mistake. We gave you too much. We're out of control. We're going to have to

open up the agreements or we're going to encourage you to a negotiated settlement and encourage you through the strong arm of the minister, the strong, dictatorial arm of the minister that's spelled out in such sections as section 11 and other sections of this bill." It's a dictatorial power which doesn't become the members of the New Democratic Party.

I feel sorry for you when you go on your weekend convention or your weekend session near Kingston. I wish you a lot of luck, because I cannot believe that the members of your party are going to support the views you're putting forward in this bill. It simply doesn't make sense from your own philosophy, and these are words from a Tory. I wish you well when you go to Kingston or Gananoque or wherever you're going to explain what you're doing with respect to this bill.

2120

I gather it said that if a couple of unions agree and they negotiate and the others don't, the Treasurer's going to say, "Sorry, I'm going to enforce a sector decision, notwithstanding that a couple of unions within that sector may have agreed to negotiate, open up an already negotiated contract." How preposterous. This is called a social contract. It simply baffles me that your principles are saying that you're going to open up contracts and roll back wages that have already been agreed to.

As I said initially, I support you. I support the members of the government in trying to cut back on government spending, government bureaucracy. You should be congratulated. But I don't think there's anyone who agrees with the methods you're following. You can pick up all kinds of editorials that compare public service wages and public service benefits to those in the private sector. I just pick one at random, the *Financial Post*, May 1993, which talks about Ontario taking the wrong course. This is mainly an editorial that deals with the taxes, but I'll tell you, it does get into the whole manner of public service wages and it supports, really, the philosophy that you're doing. You've got more support than you know out there, notwithstanding what's going to happen to you this weekend. It's just that you're going about it the wrong way.

Essentially, what this bill is going to do is it's going to give public sector workers and their employers until August 1 to cut the amazing amount of \$2 billion from the provincial payroll, \$2 billion from contracts that have already been negotiated, hard negotiations in good faith. You're going to breach the faith of your own members. You're going to breach your contacts. That's your definition of social contract. If you don't do that, the Treasurer's going to come across with a heavy hammer and he's going to tell you what you do. He's going to freeze wages and he's going to let employers impose something called 12 unpaid days off a year for each worker—"wage pauses" or something similar. This

is with people who have already got a contract. These measures would be retroactive to June 14 and would remain in place until March 31, 1996.

It's been predicted by the member for Markham, who is sitting here with us tonight, and I agree, that the \$2 billion in savings is going to come back and haunt whatever government is sitting in this place, whatever government is running this place, in 1996. I really doubt it's going to be you. But whoever it is is going to have to pay the piper in 1996, so we all should be budgeting as to what's going to happen at that particular time, because the whole issue's going to flare up again. We're either going to have to extend the social contract or let public wages again go berserk.

I have indicated that a responsible opposition party should criticize the government. I believe we're doing that. As well, I think a responsible opposition government should provide an alternative. Our leader, Mr Harris, has indicated six points which he believes would be much superior to what this government is putting forward. He is suggesting that there be a series of amendments to this legislation. I hope that this test being put forward by our leader will be considered by your caucus—I'm speaking of the New Democratic caucus—when you meet in Gananoque this weekend.

I'm going to read those to you. I know that it has been said in the House, but I'd like to make it clear exactly what our alternative plan is.

First, Mr Harris is recommending a three-year hiring freeze, which has the potential to reduce the annual cost of the public sector compensation by over \$2 billion in the third year.

As proposed, a second amendment would be there would be a public sector wage freeze that would commence on the anniversary date of all contracts and continue for a three-year period from that date. Don't break contracts. Don't break the hard-working contracts that many of you have probably been involved with in negotiating. Don't break those contracts. Mr Harris says to wait until the anniversary date of those contracts and then continue for a three-year period from that date. Be fair, be equitable.

You've got all these wonderful principles that you're coming out with: pay equity, employment equity. You're claiming that you're trying to be a fair party. You are not being fair to the public workers of this province. They've negotiated in good faith and you've broken their deal.

The third proposal that Mr Harris is putting forward would be whistle-blower provisions, which would protect public servants who report fraud, waste and other abuses from workplace retribution, while netting substantial additional savings.

One of the things that we hear in opposition of course is, "Don't make us lose jobs, don't cut back our wages,

there's all kinds of other things that could be done," and various members in both the Liberal caucus and the Conservative caucus have given you all kinds of examples as to where there could be cost savings. Many of those are being made at the suggestions of civil servants, the very civil servants who assist us in running this place. Yet those civil servants fear retribution by this government, particularly in the stages of the social contract and the heavy, dictatorial arm of the Treasurer.

So Mr Harris says, let's have whistle-blower provisions to protect public servants who report fraud, waste and other abuses from workplace retribution while netting substantial additional savings. We hire these civil servants, we have the best civil service in this land and we should treat them fairly, not like you're proposing.

Fourthly, Mr Harris has suggested that there be provisions to discourage government departments from spending their entire budgets within the fiscal year, eliminating year-end burnoff, or face rollbacks.

That's been a philosophy that has existed in every government. Yes, it existed in Conservative governments, it existed in the Liberal government and now it's existing in your government, and there must be ways—in other words, each ministry has a certain budget. That's the way the system goes. You've got to spend it because if you don't spend it you won't get it next year, and on and on. Every government seems to think like that, whether it be a municipal government, a school board government, a provincial government, and a federal government. All governments in this land think like that. So certainly we should encourage that type of provision to discourage government departments from spending their entire budgets. They don't need to do that. Budgets are guides and in many cases a higher figure is put in, but they find out they don't need it. Yet we find unbelievable government waste because of this on frivolous matters that we don't need.

Fifthly, Mr Harris is suggesting performance bonuses for public servants based on efficiencies and productive gains, similar to private sector agreements such as those involving the Canadian Auto Workers union. That's the way the system works. Someone does a good job, they should be paid accordingly, not automatic raises. In every government system we have you have these little grids, whether it be in the teachers, whether it be in the municipal area or whether it be in this area, provincial and federal. You automatically get it. It doesn't matter with respect to your capabilities.

What a strange system. If private enterprise did that many of them would have gone bankrupt a long time ago, and many of them are going bankrupt, not for that sort of practice but for other ways, and they've operated more efficiently than the government. One of the major flaws of public service, whether it be in education, whether it be in municipal or whether it be the various

levels, including hospitals, is that you get these automatic raises, whereas in fact there should be performance bonuses for public servants based on efficiencies and productive gains.

2130

Finally, Mr Harris has suggested that there be the establishment of an expenditure review committee to identify non-productive government programs and prioritize existing programs, and I will say that whether we're looking at health cards, whether we're looking at the construction of Workers' Compensation Board buildings or whether we're looking at non-profit housing, the whole housing philosophy, these philosophies of this government have got completely out of control.

I have spent considerable time as one of the members of the standing committee on public accounts, and of course in that committee you do see more of waste than perhaps you do in other committees. There are other members in this House who are present here tonight who have sat on that committee as long as I, and they've noticed it as well.

I can tell you that this proposal of Mr Harris is a good one because there is unbelievable waste. Are we going to take the attitude we can't do anything about it? You can do things about it, and Mr Harris has put forward a constructive proposal.

I will say that our party has been very critical of the Liberal Party. Speaker after speaker stands up and criticizes it, and certainly, sure, the last speaker talked about the criticism with respect to the health services. That got the Minister of Health all upset and there was a banter back and forth there. But the fact of the matter is, our health services are not going to be as good as they were because of this contract, the services that are not going to be provided.

The critic for the Liberal Party did an excellent job in expressing the concerns of the health system and where we're going, and I'm not going to do that. But my criticism of her—and I'm not going to pick on her, I'm going to pick on all members of the Liberal Party: They don't have an alternative. I don't hear one constructive alternative to the criticisms they are putting forward. We can all make these criticisms, but we must be able to put forward constructive alternatives, and they're not happening.

This legislation, of course, the history of it, we think it's moved along fairly quickly. The legislation has been introduced just recently and a copy of the bill, of course, was just recently made available. There hasn't been a great deal of time to follow the process properly. It's a process that appeared to start in the latter weeks of March and finally collapsed with the union leaders walking out and singing "Solidarity Forever" on June 3, at which time, with less than 24 hours to go from the line in the water, all 28 members of the public sector union coalition rejected the government's final offer.

Now, of course, as a result of that, a bill has been introduced called "an act to encourage negotiated settlements." It's not the negotiations that I think the union movement is used to in this province or in this country, or anywhere in the world. What a strange way to encourage settlements in the public sector, or indeed any sector. I don't wonder that there are people in this caucus who are threatening—it must be very uneasy for you, because you have followed this movement more closely than I. You've been involved in it.

One of the ministers has resigned her post. I don't know what she's going to do with the voting, whether she's going to show up in the House to vote. We hear of other people indicating they're going to vote against it and all kinds of exciting rumours, and I wish you well in your deliberations. I can just simply tell you that you're making wrong decisions and you should reconsider and you should listen to your members this weekend.

Certainly as well as locking up wages for the next three years, the provincial legislation which was tabled, I believe, on Monday would stop all merit increases, all cost-of-living increases and all pay hikes resulting from moving up a seniority grid.

A couple of interesting things there, of course, and I'd like to refer to section 11. One of the subsections, subsection 11(3)3 said, "The plan will not adversely affect employees in the sector who work full time and who earn less than \$30,000 annually," and that's been the spin that's been put on by the Treasurer and the Premier and other members of the New Democratic caucus, who say, "It won't affect people who make under \$30,000."

But the section then goes on, because it qualifies that. That amount excludes overtime pay "or employees who work part-time if their full-time equivalent earnings would be less than \$30,000 annually, excluding overtime pay."

So there's no limit. The limit that's been suggested of \$30,000 is fallacious. There's no limit. It's a farce and it's going after all kinds of people. It's going after us all. The Treasurer is now telling us that as elected officials, we don't work for the people of this province, we work for him. He's the one who's going to tell us. He alone is going to tell the people of this province what members of this Legislature should be paid, who haven't received a raise in three years.

I believe, of course, that we should all be treated the same. Whether it be members of the Legislature, whether it be members on council, whether it be members who dig ditches, whether it be people who work in the health sector, we should all be treated the same, and that's been the problem. This paragraph in section 11, of course, purports to say, "Well, it won't include people who earn less than \$30,000," except that excludes overtime pay for "employees who work part-

time if their full-time equivalent earnings would be less than \$30,000 annually, excluding overtime pay."

Of course, the whole issue of section 11—it is a rather remarkable section. It gives amazing powers to the Treasurer of this province, powers that we as legislators should be very, very concerned with. Why should one man have all this power? The section says that, "The minister may designate, as a sectoral framework, a plan that relates to a sector," and subsection 11(3) says, "The minister shall not designate a plan as a sectoral framework unless"—and then the words are said—"in the opinion of the minister..."

In the opinion of the minister, in his opinion alone, he's going to decide the terms of the social contract that will be legislated on us all, all of us who are public servants of this province. The Minister of Finance is going to make that decision; not we as legislators, the minister alone, "unless...the plan meets the following criteria."

The first one is a rather subjective test. It says, There must be "sufficient support for the plan, based on negotiations leading to the development of the plan, for the plan to form the basis for local agreements in the sector." Of course, that's in the opinion of the minister. He's the one who's going to decide. It's not going to be a committee or a commission; it's going to be him. He's going to bang his heavy arm on the table and decide what the public workers of this province are going to receive.

He says, "The plan includes provisions that will assist employers in the sector in achieving the expenditure reduction target established by the minister for the sector." Then paragraph 3, which I have just referred to, and paragraph 4 in subsection (3) says, "The plan contains appropriate provisions to minimize job losses in the sector, appropriate provisions respecting the redeployment of employees in the sector"—this is amazing stuff and it's going to be at his sole discretion—"who are released from employment or who receive notice that they will be released from employment, and appropriate provisions relating to employee training and adjustment programs."

The most amazing subsection in this section 11 is subsection (4). "Subsection (3) does not apply to a plan if"—and again these wonderful words: "in the opinion of the minister." It's in his absolute discretion, paragraph 3. That's the one about it not applying to people under \$30,000, excluding overtime pay. "Subsection (3) does not apply to a plan if, in the opinion of the minister, special circumstances apply and it is desirable to designate the plan as a sectoral framework."

What funny words. I don't even know what it means. I have no idea what it means and I challenge the members of this government to tell me what that means. It could mean anything. It certainly gives unbelievable dictatorial powers to the Treasurer. We know that,

because it's in his sole discretion, but we don't even know how his discretion is going to be exercised. We have no idea how it's going to be exercised.

2140

Then I'd like to give a couple of inequities that have been quoted in the press. We really haven't had time to properly analyse this bill. Most of us have read the bill, I hope; most of us have read the bill and we've had some analysis. There's been a bit of comment in the press, but we really haven't had a great deal of time, and that troubles me.

The Toronto Star, June 16, commented on problems with respect to pensions and wages, and I'm going to read from that. As I'm reading, I'd like you to think of these new pieces of legislation such as pay equity, how we're unfair to certain people, mainly women. I'd like you to think about that bill and a few other pieces of legislation: employment equity, where we're unfair to certain people and these pieces of legislation are going to correct that at great expense, at great expense to the people of this province and at great expense to the public servants, who not only are going to have their wages frozen but, I predict, there will be unbelievable job losses.

For example, "Particularly burdened are the people just entering a public service job and those on the verge of retirement." In other words, the people at the opposite ends of employment.

"For example, a high school teacher fresh out of college and starting work for the Metropolitan Toronto Board of Education would earn about \$31,000 in September. That's the starting rate.

"In the third year, that teacher would normally be earning \$35,000, after climbing the seniority grid outlined in the union's collective agreement.

"But under the new act, the teacher would still be on the first rung of the seniority ladder, representing a loss of \$4,000 in the third year alone."

Lots of people love to take shots at teachers. They say they're overpaid. Some of them are, some of them aren't. We have some excellent teachers in this province, but there's no question that this is not fair, because all these teachers have contracts and you're going to open them up. You're going to open them up and say: "The Treasurer's going to tell you what you're supposed to get."

The article goes on: "People on the verge of retirement are also being targeted for increased pain.

"A high school teacher's pension level is calculated according to his or her top five years of earnings. Usually, the best five years are a person's last—that's when they're at the top of the seniority scale and get maximum benefit from whatever wage gains are won in contract bargaining."

This article was written by Leslie Papp of the

Toronto Star, but the comparison's been made in several newspapers around the province.

"With wage gains frozen for the next three years, 58- or 59-year-old teachers are finding that pay for their last five years won't be as high as might be expected. Worst of all, that translates into reduced pension income—a loss they'll feel for years to come."

Again, this party, this New Democratic Party, boasts of how it's going to make this province a more equitable place. They have talked about employment equity, they've talked about pay equity, the theories behind which may or may not be good things, and those should be debated at another time. The fact of the matter is that the teachers alone are being treated unfairly, the new teachers and the teachers who are on the verge of retirement. Notwithstanding whether or not you want to take any shots at the teaching community, just remember that you're creating inequities that you shouldn't be.

The article goes on: "Employees must learn to adjust their expectations, says one of the government's social contract negotiators. There won't be a rollback in anyone's pension income, he said"—well, that's a relief to many people, although I'll tell you, with the provisions in this bill I don't trust it; that's what someone has said, but I'm very suspicious of the unbelievable powers that the Treasurer has, and anything's possible—"adding that expecting more, due to wage hikes, 'is kind of like counting your chickens before they hatch.'

"Union leaders say they could live with a straightforward wage freeze. 'But this legislation goes far beyond that,' says Liz Barkley, head of the 46,000-member Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

"There hasn't been legislation like this in the history of pay freezes in Canada."

This by a New Democratic government. You should be ashamed of yourselves. I'm quoting Liz Barkley, but there are all kinds of union leaders who are going to be down in Gananoque and they're going to be saying some wonderful things to you which you should listen to.

I'm continuing with this article, and it's typical of many articles that have been written recently.

"What pains labour is that existing, hard-won collective agreements must be pried open to remove gains like progression up a seniority ladder."

That's my concern. We're breaking contracts, a social contract that breaks contracts, and that's a terrible thing.

Mr Callahan: I would like to address the issue stated by the member who was previously speaking, the member for Halton-Peel, I think it is.

The dictatorial powers in this act—and I hope the members of the government have read it, because it is truly the most undemocratic piece of legislation I've ever seen in my life.

Mr Cousens: He's not talking about the speech.

Mr Callahan: I certainly am. He was talking about the dictatorial powers. If you refer to section 47 of the act, I suggest to you, the powers are invested in the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Finance can delegate to somebody else, that person can delegate to somebody else—you could in fact have the most menial person down the line calling the shots on the employees of this great province.

I'll tell you something. If I were representing any one of them, or if in fact I were one of those employees, I'd be scared out of my mind, because the powers here are not democratic. They're not going to withstand any constitutional challenge, and you're really wasting your time passing it. In fact, all you're doing is that you're going to incur a very large legal bill for some lawyer who is going to take it on a challenge. In the meantime, we'll be left in the dark as to exactly what this bill means and we'll be still in a total situation of chaos.

I suggest to the Conservative Party that as long as this government is in power, this entire province is in chaos. Let's get on with the day. Let's get this government out of here. That's what I'm told. That's what I'm asked by every person who meets me on the street: "How do you get rid of this government?" That's the watchword. There isn't a person in this province who has anything good to say about your government. They want an election.

If the Minister of Finance can't handle the government and the Premier of the day can't handle the government, let's call an election. Give somebody else a chance to do it. Get out of power. If you can't handle it, get out of the kitchen.

Mr Stockwell: I'd like to make a question or comment, but before I do, I think I'd like a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present, please?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum now is present. Questions or comments?

2150

Mr Stockwell: I think the social contract is something that needs to be debated. I also think a quorum should be present when we're debating something as important as this.

I will comment on the member for Dufferin-Peel's latest comments about the social contract. He has obviously given this much thought.

There is some concern out there with respect to the public service unions, concern that I think is probably reasonably founded. This government has in fact betrayed, I think—no, I don't think that; they have in

fact betrayed people on a number of occasions since their election. They are asking that the social contract be put in place with a certain degree of trust, a trust with their partners from the hospital boards, the schools, the municipalities and right through the whole process.

The problem is that very few people who are your partners, very few people in the private or public sectors, trust you any more, regardless of what you say. You've broken practically every tenet that you campaigned on. You have no belief—there's no credibility attached to your statements.

Mr Rae can stand up here today and talk about deficits and billions of dollars. Where was this created from? It was created from this government's previous two years of fiscal mismanagement. It's like I said today; it's like he's been visited by three ghosts two months ago—fiscal past, fiscal present and fiscal future—and all of a sudden he's been converted. He's converted into a right-wing capitalist, reserve-oriented person who I think is shocking not only to the unions but to his own cabinet and caucus.

I look across the floor and I'm absolutely astounded that people like Bob Mackenzie and Frances Lankin can be supporting this kind of legislation. How can they be supporting this kind of legislation? These are the kinds of things they spent their lives building up. These collective agreements they've spent their lives negotiating for. If any government were in fact trying to put this in place if they were in opposition, you'd be peeling them from the ceilings of Queen's Park. I'm very disappointed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Further questions and/or comments. The honourable member for Markham.

Mr Cousens: When the member for Dufferin-Peel speaks, he always brings something to the table that this House should stop and listen to. I listened very carefully to what the member said and I just want to thank him for representing the people of his riding as well as he does.

I think it's very, very difficult to take the kind of position he was presenting this evening, difficult because, on the one hand, like the Liberals, you'd be inclined to disagree with everything the New Democrats are doing. That would be the very easy thing to do because there's been so much they've done that's just been wrong for the province. Bill 40 is something that, when our party is in power, we will revoke and we will democratize the unions. When we take power, there's going to be a great deal to do to try to unscramble this egg that has been so shattered and changed around by this government.

Notwithstanding the contempt one can feel for what the New Democrats have been doing: their spending spree, their social spending, the way they're expanding

their ministries. When Bob Rae says he's going to reduce the number of ministries it adds up to more than there were before. When you start learning about the number of staff in the Ministry of Education and Training now—apparently there are 40 people within that ministry's staff. So on the one hand they're saying, "We're going to cut back," but on the other they're just continuing to add and add and add. They don't know the arithmetic of what it takes to run a good business because most of them have never run a business.

I wanted to just take a moment and compliment the member for Dufferin-Peel for the kind of leadership position he's presenting, the carefully reasoned arguments, which—as difficult as it might be to accept the fact that the NDP's intentions are right, it's only correct and responsible opposition to find the good things and where possible find a way in which you are able to support it. Not to do so would be—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Cousens: Not to do so is the kind of thing—

The Acting Speaker: I want to thank the honourable member for Markham. We can accommodate one final participant, the honourable member for York Mills.

Mr Turnbull: As usual, my friend the member for Dufferin-Peel has brought a cogent aspect to this debate. He has read the bill thoroughly and, as he says so well, they doesn't know what it means. I suspect that the Minister of Labour doesn't know what it means either because, quite clearly, the Minister of Labour has been fighting against this kind of legislation all of his life, and now suddenly, at this late stage, he has forgotten about what he's been saying over the years. I suppose amnesia has set in. He doesn't mind the fact that they're stripping the rights of the workers. What a strange legacy this minister is going to leave. He's going to leave office, when they're finally kicked out at the end of this session, with nothing better to show than this bill that strips the rights of workers, which nobody can even understand fully, because there are so many things that are open-ended and they won't answer the questions.

When we talk to them about problems we have, they have no answers, they have no responses; they've only got rhetoric. We have asked legitimate questions. We've pointed out that a lot of the numbers they're using are simply incorrect, they're a flight of fantasy, yet what do they respond with? More rhetoric, no facts, no understanding of what their own bill is. If they cannot write a piece of legislation that is better than this, they should resign right now, call an election and let the people of Ontario pass judgement on this government and this Minister of Labour as to what they think of what he is doing, for stripping the rights of workers of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Dufferin-Peel has two minutes in response.

Mr Tilson: I'd like to thank all of the four members

who spoke, the members for Markham, Etobicoke West, Brampton South and York Mills, on adding to my comments.

I guess I'd like to summarize that we do encourage restraint, we do encourage the effort that's being made by this government with respect to this bill, because we do have too much government in this province, too much government in this country, municipalities, school boards etc.

The problem is there is no long-term restructuring or downsizing. That's one of the major criticisms that we in the Progressive Conservative Party have with respect to this government. It's a temporary fix, and then we're going to have to pay for it. We're going to have to pay for it in 1996, whoever's in. It may be you but somehow I doubt it. I'll tell you, it's going to be a very difficult time, because we're postponing a problem for three years. So I would suggest that the government go away and again think it out with respect to the issue of restructuring or downsizing.

I think the more difficult issue is the fact that in the middle of agreements, in the middle of contracts, the definition of "social contract" is to break existing contracts. Mike Harris suggests and our Progressive Conservative Party suggests that if you're going to do anything with respect to public service employees, that should be done on the anniversary of the agreement, not during the agreement. Again I emphasize, you people should be ashamed if you're going to support that principle, because I know it's a principle that none of you have supported either in this place or prior to coming to this place.

Mr Cousens: They've never had principles.

Mr Tilson: They've got some principles, and that's one principle that they're breaking and it's one of the main principles that they're breaking. You're going to have an awful time explaining it to your supporters.

Mr Perruzza: Thank you for this opportunity to be able to participate in this social contract legislation debate.

The Liberal member for Brampton South asked a probing question just a few short minutes ago and said quite flatly that nobody understands what the social contract is all about. Well, I'll try to explain to him and to some others in this House what the social contract is all about.

The social contract in fact reduces the public payroll by \$2 billion. That means anyone who works for government, anyone who works for municipalities, anyone who works for school boards, anyone who works for any agency, board and commission of the government would contribute, and collectively that large group of people would contribute in salaries, in payments, \$2 billion to the social contract so the government spends less money.

2200

Quite contrary to what some of my Liberal friends and some of my Conservative friends have said as well, I see the social contract as simply one more step in getting the financial house of the provincial government in order.

I'd just like to go back a little bit. As you will know, Mr Speaker, in 1990, when the New Democratic Party took office in this province, we were promised, essentially, by the then Liberal government, the Peterson Liberal government, that we would find at fiscal year-end—that is on March 31, 1991—a \$39-million surplus. But what we in fact found was a financial mess. Things were so chaotic that according to the auditor—the auditor, not us, because many of our friends will disagree on this particular—

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. On a point of order, the member for Brampton South.

Mr Callahan: Mr Speaker, the member is being very eloquent but totally inaccurate. I would suggest that it is totally inappropriate to mislead the House in terms of saying those things—

The Acting Speaker: Order. This particular type of language is not acceptable. Would the honourable member please reconsider.

Mr Callahan: I will reconsider. They're prevaricating, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: This is not acceptable either. The member for Brampton South knows that.

Mr Callahan: Mr Speaker, how do I put it? I will withdraw anything that's offensive because as an honourable member—

The Acting Speaker: Please. Thank you. You've withdrawn.

Mr Callahan: But how do you tell him that he's wrong?

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. You've withdrawn. The honourable member for Downsview.

Mr Perruzza: The reason I pointed to the auditor's conclusion is because I expected and suspected that my Liberal friends—while they were telling everyone that there would be a surplus, there was a deficit. The Provincial Auditor attests to the fact that there was a \$3-billion deficit when we took office, when we finally were able to wrestle the keys of office from our Liberal friends.

There was a massive slide in this province. As you will know, we were in the middle and confronting one of the worst recessions in the history of Ontario, certainly in my lifetime. So if you're a New Democrat, what do you do? Ask yourself the question, what do you do in the face of such bad times, in the face of such a massive slide?

We don't have to go through the litany, through all

the programs that essentially brought the downfall, brought the recession. We don't have to go through the high interest rate policy of the Conservatives, the free trade policy of the Conservatives, the tax-and-spend policies of the former Liberals here in the province of Ontario. We don't have to go through that. Suffice it to say, and every Ontarian knows, that we were entering one of the worst recessions of our time.

I'll tell you what a New Democrat does in the face of all that. What a New Democrat does is to fight like heck to preserve essential services. You fight like heck to preserve essential services: to preserve medicare, to preserve education services, to preserve social services, to preserve community services. These are the kinds of things that are essential and fundamental and have come to be desired and wanted by every member of our constituencies. That's what a New Democrat does and that's precisely the road we embarked on; that's precisely what we did.

You will recall that health care under our Liberal friends was increasing at a double-digit rate of inflation year after year, 9%, 10, 11%, 12%, year after year. In fact, if you looked at health care, pretty soon it would occupy almost 50% of the entire provincial budget. We wrestled that monster to the ground, and you will know that this year we have one of the lowest increases in health care spending of any time of any government. That's quite an achievement in itself.

You will also know that during the heyday of the Liberals in Ontario—I guess one of the other fundamental ills that we faced during this massive slide in the economy, during this time when we recorded enormous unemployment levels which we as New Democrats quite frankly can't tolerate—we have been, from day one, investing major capital dollars in job creation. I think our good friends across the way will attest to the fact that the Jobs Ontario Training fund has done just that, has created jobs. The Jobs Ontario Capital fund: Just today I was in Cobourg opening a new OPP detachment, a major capital investment which will create jobs. That's part of a much bigger fund of a total of \$3.3 billion. That's what we've been doing.

I have to tell you that the other ill that we faced, as you and every Ontarian will know, is that in the heyday of the Liberals hydro rates increased to the tune of double digits year after year. My Liberal and Conservative friends will tell you that if this trend had been allowed to continue, this trend would have rendered Ontario business uncompetitive. It would have been a direct deterrent to capital investment in this province.

Along with these major cost-saving measures—bringing Ontario Hydro to a more reasonable level, bringing health care spending to a far more reasonable level—we have also this year delayed government programs to the tune of \$4 billion. That means that Ontarians will be paying \$4 billion less for,

in many cases, redundant programs, programs which had essentially outlived their usefulness.

If you're a New Democrat in tough times, what do you do? I'll tell you what you do.

(1) You do the kinds of things that will preserve key essential services that every Ontarian has come to rely on.

(2) You invest in job creation programs. That's precisely what this government has done, invested in job creation programs.

(3) You do the kinds of things that render Ontario competitive. You downsize and you reduce the costs of hydro, for example.

Along with all that, you do the social contract, because when you look at the reality of Ontario and when you look at what has happened in the private sector, when you look at the job losses, when you look at what people out there in the private sector are working for today, it bears no relation to what they were working for two, three and four years ago. I know, and I will tell you, that in my own community of Downsview bricklayers who were earning \$21, \$22 or \$23 an hour back in 1988-89, today, if they are lucky to find work, if they are lucky to have work, and many of whom work on government-funded projects—housing projects, and as I stated earlier, OPP detachment projects, direct investments that this government is making in improving infrastructure—you will find that in most cases they are working for \$10, \$11, \$12 and \$13 an hour. That's an incredible cut in pay.

It's a hard thing for a New Democrat to sit here and say, "Gee, we've got to share the pain." We're going to have to cut across the board and share the pain. It would be wonderful not only to be able to stand here and say, "Not only should we protect public service wages," because that would be a wonderful thing, but to say: "We should keep the public service where it is. Let's bring everybody else out there in line with what the public service is getting." I'd be for that. I'm sure that every other New Democrat would be for that. I'm sure that every Conservative—

Hon Mr Pouliot: That's going too far. Mr Turnbull wouldn't.

Mr Perruzza: Well, maybe not every Conservative would be for that, and maybe not every Liberal would be for that either, but I'm sure you would find a few who would certainly be for that. We could probably put together enough of a coalition here to ensure that happens. But that's not what is happening in the real world out there. There's no question it's a difficult thing to say to government workers, "We're going to have to reduce the government payroll by \$2 billion." It's a difficult thing, there's no question about it. Many people in this place, certainly many New Democrats in this place, will agree to that fact. But I believe that's

essential for the eventual prosperity of this province, because there's no question that we can't live beyond our means.

2210

We all know that you can't simply go to taxes all the time. You can't do the kind of thing the Liberals did when they were in office in good times. They needed more money; they went to more taxes. They were getting more money because of good times; they went to more taxes. We don't believe you can do that, because there's a limit.

What do you do to protect and preserve essential services? You wrestle down how much you can spend without greatly impacting services at street level, where people use the most.

I'm not going to speak for much longer, but I want to allude to a comment the member for Brampton South made earlier. In pompous Conservative style, he stood in his place lambasting us for having the courage to tackle the problems of today, today, not leaving them till tomorrow but tackling them today.

Yes, in the middle of all of those problems, we're even dealing with the problem of the Dome debt. We all know the debt the Liberals saddled us with. We're trying to grapple with that problem as well.

I want to go back to a comment my Conservative colleague made but a few moments ago in his pompous Conservative style. He stood in his place—you and I witnessed him together—and he yelled across the floor, "In 1995, we're gonna to be there and we're gonna to do this and we're gonna do that." But you know what? He may very well be here in 1995 in government. I don't know. I know that as New Democrats we're going to fight like heck to keep him out because we know what he will do and what they would do to the social fabric of this province.

That's going to be up to the people of the province of Ontario, and the people of the province of Ontario may in fact give him an opportunity. But if that sad day should befall the province of Ontario, we will not hand over to them the keys that they handed over to us, we will not hand over to them the mess they handed over to us; we will hand them over a financial house in order in the government of Ontario.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I think the viewers can probably realize why we're in such a mess when they hear such a confused, almost unintelligible argument on the bill.

What has happened is that the government—you can remember two years ago, this was a government that was going to spend its way out of the recession—ran up a deficit that was unbelievable, \$10 billion.

Everyone told them they were wrong. The Conservative Party, our party, everyone told them they were wrong. You got this province into one heck of a mess

and now everyone in this province is going to pay the price to try and get out of the mess.

I'll tell you what you're going to leave the province. The member said he's going to leave the province with the finances in order. What you're going to leave the province is the worst employment record we've ever seen in this province. It is a disgrace. I will say it to all of us: I don't know how the New Democratic caucus can live with this chart, unemployment rate at 14% in 1993 in this province, never getting below 12%. It is an absolute disgrace, and why? Because the NDP government, led by Bob Rae, has mismanaged the economy.

They'll say it's free trade and all those things, but when you came into government, Ontario had the lowest unemployment rate in the country. Now you will find that Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia all have dramatically lower rates. No one has ever seen a record like this, where we have gone from 6% unemployment to 14% unemployment, and then the government has the nerve to say that its plans are going to lead to 13% unemployment by 1995. I say to all of us, we can't live with that and you should be ashamed of yourselves.

Mr Tilson: The member for Downsview has given us a lot of answers this evening, but I think the member for Scarborough-Agincourt has put his finger on a question that many of us are asking, many of us in the opposition, many of the media, and many of the unions are asking the same question. We know you're opening contracts, we know you're rolling back wages, we know you're not having any long-term downsizing or restructuring. We know you've broken your word; in other words, that you've broken contracts, opened up contracts, contracts that have been negotiated in good faith.

We know all of that, and as I said in my comments, I think the most dastardly of all the things your government is doing is that you're breaking your word. You entered into contracts in good faith. All the many contracts in the civil service unions and the public sectors, whether it be school boards; every last one of them was negotiated and bargained in good faith by both sides, and the Treasurer is unilaterally breaking his word and simply, instead of waiting till the anniversary date, he's starting in the middle of those contracts and just ripping them up in his dictatorial fashion.

The question I have for the member is a question that the member from Agincourt started on, and that has to do with section 7, which is a very general section. It says, "The minister shall establish expenditure reduction targets for sectors and for employers." I don't know what that means.

You have a lot of answers in your comments. I'd like you to tell me what that means. I think the real unknown of this legislation is, how many people will be laid off? How many people in the civil service, to reach the targets that are set forth by section 7 and many of

the other sections, how many employees are going to lose their jobs; not just have their wages frozen but lose their jobs?

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): I'd just like to comment on the speech of the member for Downsview with regard to the social contract.

The member touched one of the points that really is quite telling with regard to what's happening today in Ontario 1993, and that is basically how we find ourselves in the situation we're in right now. The member pointed out quite clearly that where we are right now is because of what's happened in the economy, that the government is having to adjust expenditures in order to keep in touch with what's happening in the economy around us.

But what's also important is what the member signalled, which is that one of the difficulties you have dealing with an issue like this is that a lot of people could take advantage of the situation politically, and I think we're seeing a little bit of that happening on the part of the opposition and, quite frankly, sometimes on the part of the media.

With regard to not really getting people to the table in terms of understanding what the problem is, I would urge members of the opposition and others to, yes, have a real debate about this, and yes, talk about the issues, but try to stay away from some of the strong rhetoric we hear out there that ends up scaring people away from the table and at the same time scares people about their jobs.

I've been talking to people in my community, both within unions and within management. I know that the Liberal leader, Mrs McLeod, sent a fax to all the communities almost across Ontario, because I know the city of Timmins got one today, and the document talked about some quite erroneous facts in regard to the social contract. I'll bring those into the House next week and I'll talk about that in a little more detail. I know of another fax that went out by the Leader of the Opposition to other people within municipalities the same way.

I think we need to stick to the facts. We need to understand that we are where we are now because of a number of reasons: yes, because of free trade, yes, because of the world economy, yes, because of mechanization in the workplace. It is a jobless problem that we have, and with fewer people out there working, governments have less revenue, and when you have less revenue, you have to be able to adjust your spending. I think the member spoke on that quite eloquently and I would urge all members to try to take the same tack.

2220

The Acting Speaker: We can accommodate one final participant. The member from Brampton South.

Mr Callahan: I listened very intently, and it's obvious that the member who spoke first was not

talking about the legislation; he was talking about the social contract. There's no question that we all recognize that the expenditures in this province have got to the point where the public has to be rescued, but I challenge you to read the legislation. This legislation in fact takes the power out of all of your hands. It puts it in the hands of one person, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Finance doesn't even have to do it; he can delegate it to anybody he likes. Even the cabinet doesn't have control over this. The Minister of Finance is the guy in the cat seat, and if you people are going to simply give to the Minister of Finance the entire rights to do this, well, then, why don't all you guys go home and we'll save the money on your legislative emoluments, if that's the kind of stuff you're prepared to do?

In addition to that, there's an act in Ontario called the Statutory Powers Procedure Act. That makes certain that everything is done fairly. That is eliminated from this bill. I urge anybody who's got eyes to read and any intelligence to look at this act and recognize the fact that this is giving dictatorial powers to the Minister of Finance. You people are all unnecessary. He can do what he likes, when he likes, how he likes and wherever he likes. The cabinet can do whatever it likes. Now, if you're prepared to give that kind of power over the workers of this province, then I'm not prepared to participate in that type of a conspiracy, and that's precisely what it is. Every one of you people who purport to be New Democrats who are looking after the affairs of the people and the workers of this province, you're letting them down. You're collecting your money under false pretences. You don't deserve to sit in this House. Get your people and look at a bill that's fair, that's going to deal with these people fairly or try to negotiate with them fairly. Don't try to shove some type of doctrine down their throat.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Downsview has two minutes in response.

Mr Perruzza: Quite frankly, I didn't expect much more from the opposition because, back in 1990, I guess, before the provincial election, they must have had some foresight. They must have. They must have known and seen that the Conservative GST was on its way, free trade was on its way. So they decided to call an election two years too early, because they knew what the unemployment picture was going to look like later that year. They must have had some sense of what the financial picture was going to look like later that year. Otherwise, they wouldn't have called an election two years early.

So, to respond very directly to the member from Scarborough-Agincourt when he stands up and he filibusters about unemployment, I don't accept the unemployment levels the way they are and I don't think that any New Democrat on this side of the House accepts where unemployment is. That's precisely why

we have made major, major efforts to redirect major capital resources to job creation. In fact, if he reads the budget document, he will find that in the last year alone we created over 95,000 jobs. Is that enough? No, it's not enough, because during the first little while of free trade and during the first little while of the GST, we lost close to 400,000 jobs. So certainly it's not enough, and unemployment isn't coming down enough, but we're doing our best. We're doing our darnedest to ensure that employment gets right up there. They will know that the Jobs Ontario Training fund, for example, has employed close to 25,000 people. Is it enough? No. We're going to do more and we're going to do better. You just watch and learn.

The Acting Speaker: On a point of order, the member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: I would like to move unanimous consent to allow the member for Downsview to speak again.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent?

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): No, no, no, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: No. We don't have unanimous consent for the member for Downsview.

On a point of order, the member for Halton Centre.

Mrs Sullivan: Before my colleague begins to speak, in my remarks I used a figure with respect to the expenditure cutback plan for long-term care, public health service and so on that was incorrect. I want to correct the record and indicate to the House that the figure that I should have used was \$100 million, which are included in the expenditure cutback plan.

The Acting Speaker: I wish to thank the honourable member for correcting the record. The honourable member for Lawrence.

Mr Cordiano: I did not wish to grant unanimous consent for a continuation of that Gettysburg Address because we still are in what I would consider prime time and that would certainly be more embarrassing for all of us and I wanted to cut it off right there.

Let me start off, and I will try not to be inflammatory, as much as this debate is pointed and there are polarized positions. But let me try and go back to the reasons why—and I think it's very, very important to understand how and why we have arrived at the point we now find ourselves. It's important because, quite frankly, there's a misunderstanding and a misconception at least in two parties of this House and, as I understand it, the Tories on second reading are supportive of this legislation.

I would say to them that there's luckily an opportunity for you to vote against this legislation on third reading and I think after you examine this bill as closely as we have in our party, you will find it unsupportable,

that in the end I am sure that if the Tories realize what they're dealing with, will not support this legislation, because I can't believe that the third party, the Conservative Party, in the end would support what amounts to a series of initiatives which, by implication, would have them support the entire government's fiscal policy, including its tax increase in its latest budget proposal, because as a result of their mismanagement of the fiscal reins in this province we now find ourselves in this particular position of difficulty. It is precisely because they have mismanaged and precisely because after almost three years of governance we've arrived at this crucial and critical point in the history of our province.

Many speakers on that side of the House, the government side, have commented on budgetary initiatives and what they thought they had to do three years ago, and the previous speaker elaborated on this. I will not go into much detail on that, but he talked about the very difficult crisis that this government found itself in, facing a difficult recession, which I believe we still are in in this province. The signs of recovery simply aren't there to indicate to me that we are coming out of that deep recession. Perhaps we have some form of recovery in certain sectors of the economy, but certainly we don't feel that with job creation.

The member for Scarborough-Agincourt, our critic for Finance, has pointed out repeatedly and my leader has pointed out that job creation simply is not taking place in the economy, that there's no confidence in the ability of this government not only to create jobs but to allow for an economic climate which is self-sustaining, and job creation becomes a natural consequence of that.

That's the important point, that initially this government undertook a huge expenditure program to take us out of a recession which was happening worldwide and that in fact it spent to the tune of a \$10-billion deficit when many people had been critical of that, had forewarned them, had advised them that they were leading down a terrible and destructive path, that in the end it would lead to this deficit wall, that we would reach the saturation point. Many people warned them of that. We told them that; the Conservatives told them that; other observers told them that. It took three years, three budgets, for them to finally realize the error of their ways.

2230

I say that because it's important to understand that if you believed initially that you could fight this recession, this deep restructuring of the economy, by spending your way out of it to stimulate the economy, you misunderstood the signals, you misunderstood the nature of this recession. You misunderstood in a management way what the deepening of the crisis really meant to this province, that in fact restructuring was taking place in the economy. Instead of understanding that, this government spent in traditional ways, or attempted to.

It increased expenditures at an enormous rate.

Let me just highlight some of those expenditures this government undertook back in those days, which we pointed out were terrible errors. We repeatedly suggested to the government that it would lead to these problems. They negotiated a 14% raise in salaries in 1991 for OPSEU, costing the taxpayers over half a billion dollars annually. They negotiated increases in doctors' fees totalling \$512 million over three years. They failed to implement a strategic cost reduction at that time. If they understood that the economy overall needed to be restructured, then they would have understood that government itself needed to be restructured and, as a result, throwing money at the problem simply wouldn't do.

I've heard it said this evening that the Liberals spent during the good years and that additional taxes were raised. That's true; we did spend additional funds. We did raise additional revenues, for very good reasons. The economy was booming, we had unparalleled growth rates, the best five years in the history of this province's economy. The growth rates were at some years approaching 7% and 8%. Of course we could spend at the rates we were talking about. The capital infrastructure of this province was seriously underfunded for many previous years. We had a serious recession in 1981, 1982, 1983, those three years, and we had a serious underfunding of the capital in this province. As a result of that, there needed to be additional expenditures in a variety of areas to maintain a high level of services. There was no question about that, absolutely.

But I say to the members opposite, that was done in very good economic times and we followed a philosophy that said you pay as you go. I remind members that we—

Mr Perruzza: No, you tax as you go; that's what you did.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Downsview.

Mr Cordiano: We taxed, but we paid as we went. We did not run up a \$10-billion deficit. I remind the member opposite that in fact we had a surplus and, yes, it was a real surplus. That \$400 million went to paying down the accumulated debt of this province. I remind the member as well that \$32 billion of accumulated debt—your debt in one year, \$10 billion, amounted to approximately 25% of the total accumulated debt that this province had seen up to that point in time. We're not talking about a small amount of money; we're talking about a huge amount of money. We're talking about a fundamental change in the finances of this province. So I say to the member, it's important to understand that.

Let me get to the whole question of the social contract and why in the end that process was flawed.

Mr Tilson: A point of order, Mr Speaker: The

member from Lawrence is making some wonderful comments and I think we need a quorum to hear those comments.

The Speaker: Would the table count to determine if there's a quorum.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals (Mr Alex D. McFedries): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Speaker: I recognize once again the honourable member for Lawrence.

Mr Cordiano: As I was saying, and I believe I left off at this point, I was going to discuss the social contract process. I understand what this government attempted to do after two years, after failing to realize the gravity of the enormous crisis that this province was facing fiscally. Of course, it finally dawned on the Premier. He must have been visited, as someone put it earlier today, I think it was the member for Etobicoke West, by three ghosts who impressed upon him the need for fiscal restraint.

It is precisely because of the complete change, complete turnaround, complete turnabout, 180-degree change, which I must say this government has undertaken in a variety of areas—but with regard to fiscal policy and fiscal management there had been a consistency throughout the last several years of overspending and overtaxing in a very difficult period of economic crisis. To suddenly put on the brakes of a machine that had been rolling along in a time when very little else was going on in the economy causes enormous damage to the economy.

It's precisely because of that, precisely because this came to a sudden stop, with a shocking effect on all sectors of the economy, that it is truly a psychologically shocking impact that we're talking about here. We're talking about almost one out of every four workers being affected by this process in the province of Ontario. We're talking about enormous spinoff from that. What we're saying is that the inconsistency, in and of itself, has a dramatic negative impact on the economy. You have to realize that.

Apart from that, it's the confusing, convoluted signals that are sent out by this government that have the economy going in one direction. You've got to remember the juggernaut that's created by the additional spending that was undertaken by this government in the previous three budgets. It creates a steamroller effect. There is no doubt about that.

Once, then, this government undertakes to bring that to a complete and sudden halt and realizes that restraint is the order of the day and that, politically, it's the only way to salvage itself and that international financiers are demanding that the government use restraint and bring

its fiscal house in order, once that's done, once you put on the brakes, you have an incredible skid and you have an incredible shock on the economy.

The social contract did just that. Apart from that, it said to the workers who were affected, it said to all of the 950,000 people, "We are doing an about-face, a 180-degree turnaround," after three years of unprecedented increases, as I've pointed out, in settlements that exceeded anybody's imagination in terms of the difficult times that we were facing, increases that were quite embarrassing given the difficult economic circumstances. Literally, what this government is doing is, it's undoing everything that it attempted to do in its first two years. It is peeling it right back. One has to understand the gravity of that, the consequence of that, of what you will have unleashed.

2240

Of course, no one could follow that kind of management. No one could follow that senseless, directionless effort on the part of the government when it tells workers, "We are now going to sit down in an enlightened fashion and deal with the workers of this province in a way which would see to it that there's fairness and equity, and that management would sit down with labour and discuss how to effect the restructuring process," three years, certainly, after the private sector had commenced this, three years after everyone told them that it was unwise to continue to spend at the levels that had been undertaken.

It's precisely because of this that how could anyone have expected that the social contract process would have worked? You simply didn't understand that workers could not sit down in such a short period of time. Labour, the people involved who were your partners, and all concerned who were at the table, simply could not understand, couldn't believe the horror of what they were witnessing. I can appreciate that, because you gave them so much in the beginning. You gave away the store, and suddenly, unbeknownst to them, you were going to take it all back and then some.

If that's the new style of labour-management relations, is it any wonder that people were scratching their heads and were really exasperated at the process? Is it any wonder that it failed? Is it any wonder that in such a short period of time, this government attempted to do what I thought was an impossible task?

Applause.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Cordiano: Now that we have a new attendant for members of the House, I would say that the Minister of Transportation can bring water for other members of the House. He's found his new vocation and he looks very well at what he's doing right now. I would commend members to tip him adequately, because it certainly commends what he is doing.

Let me get back to the item at hand. I would say that we are now dealing with a very difficult, confusing, chaotic situation, as my colleagues have repeatedly pointed out to the government. It is difficult at best to understand the consequences of what has been undertaken, and once again there is a guillotine hanging over the heads of people who are attempting to deal with what this government has unleashed in Bill 48, the attempt to peel back \$2 billion in wage expenditures.

It's important to realize that in view of the legislation, as has been pointed out, there are two critical areas with this legislation that are important to realize.

For employees who have special leave provisions who perform critical functions, the days that will be considered leave days that will not be made up will be given back to those employees after a three-year period. That's very important, because we do not understand the true implications of that. We do not understand the cost implications of that, which in the future could end up costing a succeeding government enormous amounts of money and will have the opposite effect of having restructured the government and expenditures on the wage side.

In the end, we could have a built up, pent up demand that is unleashed at the end of those three years, and I say that is not acceptable. That is a short-term solution which attempts to deal with the crisis in a panicky and hasty way.

That's one good fundamental reason why you should oppose this bill: It does not view restructuring on a long-term basis. It does not say to the people who are dealing with this, who are the partners of this government, and the employees, "Let's deal with this in a logical, rational fashion and sit down over a period of time which would give due consideration, due process for the lengthy, complex, related issues that are involved."

At the end of the day, I predict, and I think others of my colleagues would agree with this, that we will inevitably see numerous layoffs. In order to effect this much in savings, the \$2 billion, you will see a significant number of job losses. In my opinion, there is very little hope that the restructuring and reorganization that the government talks about, and the fairness and equity that it lauds in its bill will result in a rational reduction in expenditures without job losses. I don't believe that for a moment. I think that's the kind of power this government is unleashing, apart from the other areas that have been criticized.

One of the other important matters that has been raised by other members deals with the powers that are granted to the Minister of Finance to deal in a dictatorial fashion with this item, again giving the guillotine to this process, to these agreements which will be undertaken by the partners of this government. If they're not enacted and if the targets are not met, then the

minister will act by decree, and the minister is given enormous powers to do that in this legislation. It is a serious, fundamental restructuring of management-labour relations.

The Premier stands up in this House, and previously on many occasions has stood in this House, and has said, "There needs to be a new day in this province for labour-management relations." In the discussions around Bill 40, there were references to the need for the restructuring of relationships between management and labour. During those discussions and that debate, this government, many speakers and commentators on the side of the government, talked about management-labour relations needing a new way of doing business, that the relationship wasn't working in this province and that it was essential that Bill 40 be passed because management-labour relations needed to be reorganized and reordered, and there was a new priority that was required.

If this is what this government meant by that, then I'm sorry, but I'm confused. Certainly many, many people out there agree with that, that this government has no idea. It sends out mixed signals. It contradicts itself. It sets off in one direction and then goes back and says: "No, we made a mistake. It costs us too much money. We're going to reverse all of that."

That's no way to manage an economy. That has catastrophic effects on the economy. It is a convoluted, distorted way to manage the economy. That's not real governance.

That's why I say to the members opposite that this is a matter of confidence, and I would say to the third party that this is a matter of confidence. This is a \$2-billion reduction of expenditure. It is surely equal to any budgetary initiative. Surely to goodness, talking about a \$2-billion reduction in expenditures is tantamount to any tax bill, is equal to the level or the degree of importance of any tax matter or budgetary item.

I say to the members opposite and to the third party, if they're listening, that this is a matter of confidence. I have yet to see any matter that could be dealt with that is of this gravity that would be denied to be a matter of utmost importance to this province.

I cannot understand how the government would refuse the people of this province a larger say in how we restructure a very important aspect of our economy, the 25%-30% of the people of this province who are employed, the 950,000 people—think about that; that's almost 25%, one out of every four workers of this province—who are affected by this.

2250

Furthermore, the untold damage that's unleashed to the economy is incredible. I would say to the third party as well that by implication you are supporting the fiscal policies of this government by supporting this initiative.

I would say to the members of the government party that if this were truly an effort at restraint that was long-term, that was rational, a real attempt to undertake restraint, to undertake on a priority basis what needed to be done to exact the kinds of changes in the wage bill that we're talking about, that is something that simply cannot be done in two months; there is simply no way you can undertake this kind of reordering, reprioritizing of management, the efforts you're undertaking here.

To do that in a short period of time is precisely a big error that you are administering, a big blow to the economy. It's an incredible situation that you would attempt to reorganize, restructure, downsize, delay it—call it whatever you like—to do that and to give the semblance of having sat down with people on a rational basis, to do it in this fashion in as swift a period of time as we're dealing with. Is it any wonder that these talks failed? Is it any wonder that we find ourselves this day dealing with this matter in this way, in a draconian fashion? Obviously, at the end of the day this government has to enact that kind of legislation, because it simply did not understand the consequences of the efforts that were unleashed.

If, as I say, it was a serious attempt at restructuring the government—I know the Tories will say that's exactly what they've called for, that it could be enacted through amendments I believe they're going to bring forward, that they're talking about restructuring the government. I don't believe this bill can be improved in that way. I don't believe the government will go along with those amendments, and I have not seen those amendments in much detail.

I know in principle we all support restraint, but we're not talking about a reordering or restructuring of government here; we're talking about an immediate hit, something that has enormous impact on the economy in a negative way. It can only worsen the unemployment situation, and that's certainly going to be true. At the end of the day we're going to see additional layoffs, and I don't believe we could not have accomplished these savings without having to sacrifice as many people as will be sacrificed. There will be job losses. That's inevitable because of the way in which you've undertaken this, and that's really the point of all this, that we oppose this because it creates further chaos, it creates confusion out there. This process is flawed right from the beginning and at the end of the day will cause further layoffs, will cause further damage to the economy as a whole.

If you told us we were going to undertake restructuring, using whatever management techniques are available today—and there are obviously numerous examples in the private sector that have been undertaken—that could be worked out over a decent period of time; let's not put a number on it, but certainly not this short span of time we're talking about. One day the Premier woke

up, probably saw the news program on New Zealand or got calls from bankers in New York, or whatever—God knows whatever else: was visited by three ghosts, as the member for Etobicoke West suggested—and decided that we're on a restraint kick and that this needed to be done in this fashion.

"We'll bring in a guillotine now because those talks failed," and he thought: "How am I going to handle this and get people on side? I've got to give them the illusion that they can go along with this process and realize some of these savings by giving them the semblance of having been involved in a rational process" which attempts not to lose the numbers of jobs that we're going to see as a result of this mismanagement.

That's really what we're talking about at the end of the day here: Couldn't this have been done in a more rational way, given that over a period of time, more sensibly, we could have produced the result the government was looking for? I haven't even had time to go into the kinds of suggestions we've made eliminating the expenditures that this government has undertake. I note I have one minute left, but very briefly, on the non-profit housing initiatives this government has undertaken, the auditor, and I think someone mentioned this in an earlier speech, has suggested that there is enormous waste, somewhere upwards of \$200 million, not to mention that we disagree at this time with the undertakings of this government in the whole non-profit housing sector.

There are numerous other examples we've put forward that my leader has suggested to this government, ways in which to save huge and significant dollars and to seriously avoid layoffs, because that's the worst thing that could happen at this time. That certainly will not build additional confidence in the economy. To have more people laid off is the last thing we should expect from this government, from any government as a matter of fact.

If that's what happens, if that's the end result of this undertaking, then I would say to these members, you ought to be ashamed to present yourselves at the next election. That's going to hang over your heads. I feel for you, because I'm afraid you won't be able to hang your head with any kind of decency.

Mr Tilson: I'd like to comment very briefly on the member for Lawrence's remarks. I've been listening very carefully to many of the Liberal speakers who stood up. They've been giving some very legitimate criticisms of the way this government is operating. The member for Lawrence made some legitimate criticisms, but the big difficulty that I and the members of my party, the Progressive Conservative Party have—and I'm sure I hear heckles from the NDP—is that we don't hear any alternatives. We don't hear any plans as to what they'd do if they were in government to correct the

philosophy of too much government. As usual, there has been no time spent describing the Liberal alternatives. There's no time spent because there aren't any. The Liberals do not have an alternative.

The member for Lawrence did spend some time commenting on my leader's alternatives, the three-year hiring and wage freeze and the public sector wage freeze etc, but the only criticism he seemed to have towards that plan by the Conservatives is that the NDP government will not support it. There was no criticism; there was no stating that it will not work. We believe it will work. We would encourage the government to support our amendments. After this weekend, I'm sure they will be taking a long, hard look at the amendments that are being proposed by our leader.

I look forward to more debate with the Liberal Party. Perhaps as the debate goes on they will be able to find some sort of alternative to solve this problem that has been created not only by their government but more particularly by the government of the New Democratic Party.

Mr Perruzza: Just to respond very briefly to the Liberal member from Lawrence, he said a couple of things during his discourse that I can't understand. As I sat here, I could see how glossy-eyed he was for the gravy days of the 1980s. I'd like to rephrase his words. He used the phrase, "You pay as you go." Well, we all know what the Liberals did: Sure, they paid as they went; they also taxed along the way, each and every step of the way. They essentially took provincial expenditures, in 1985 around \$26 billion or \$27 billion, to \$43 billion and \$44 billion by the time they were voted out of office, before they were given their pink slips.

2300

Having said that, I'd like to focus on another point that was raised by the member. He talks about more job losses, about losing more jobs. He's missed the point. I would urge him to pick up the bill and read it again because he's missed the point. The whole point to the social contract exercise is to sit down with each and every one of the employer groups and work out a system, a scheme, whereby you minimize job losses or you virtually lose none. I urge the Liberal member from Lawrence to look at the bill very closely. He will find that there's even specific wording that essentially guarantees jobs and preserves jobs. I would urge him to have another look at that again, because that's completely fallacious and completely untrue.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): I had an opportunity to go home for a couple of hours for dinner before coming back for this evening debate. A dear old friend of mine came over to visit for about an hour or so. Inevitably, the topic of the social contract came up.

His comment in referring to Bob Rae—I'm sorry to use strong language—was, "That poor son of a"—and

you can fill in the blanks. He said to me, "He has violated every principle that he stood for in opposition. He has offended just about every community and group in the province from doctors to teachers to nurses to environmentalists," and the list went on. Then he said to me: "But what he's doing here in this so-called social contract of his is waging war against the one million people who provide all of the public services that we have in Ontario. I hope you can do everything you can to stop it."

He said to me that the bill is among the most arbitrary and most offensive pieces of anti-worker legislation that he had ever seen and that he just couldn't believe it, given the traditional support that the New Democrats had received from and given to working people, and somehow something must have gone wrong in the Premier's head for him actually to be proposing to do this.

My friend from Lawrence pointed out, and I think eloquently, that the ultimate tragedy is that the bill itself will not achieve the ends it sets for itself and is reason enough to make sure that when the debate is over this House has the will and the capacity to defeat it.

The Speaker: The member for Chatham-Kent.

Mr Hope: As I listen to the member from Lawrence, I know well he always tries to put his points across, because I've seen him work his way through committee. I would only say to the member from Lawrence that I've been diligently waiting for the Liberal leader and I have never heard those 18 points that are going to try to fix this problem. I've heard a lot of criticism come from the Liberals, and that's what oppositions are supposed to do, but I must honestly stand here and say I still wait for the day when I hear the Liberal leader say she didn't have in 20 minutes enough time to put 18 points across. I never heard one. I'm hoping maybe in the two minutes that are allotted to you in the time of response you might tell us one of the 18 points your Liberal leader is trying to put across.

I must also exercise, as I listen to your opening remarks about paying as you go—yes, you're right, you did pay as you go, and you did do a good job at it. You did tax. You did increase the provincial retail tax by one point; you raised it up to 8%. You also offloaded a lot to municipalities during the good economic times when prosperity was there in some of our communities.

You say, "Pay as you go." I'm hoping that you're not taking the words of your leader and saying to a lot of communities where some of the expenditure control plans have been put in place and have been effected that, if you're making promises, "Vote for us and we'll give you what you want." Because I've listened to the debates and question period very closely, and I've heard the Tories put proposals across—but their ideology just doesn't meet ours—but I have still not to this day heard what the Liberals' is.

Because if you're telling me that you have an agenda and you have an idea and in the next election—all I've seen is the idea come out of your leader that she promises people things through AgriCorp, which was one of the prime examples, "Vote for Liberals and accountability." That's not accountability in the way that you're talking today about bringing your control plans in place.

Please, at least try to tell us one of the 18 points that the Liberals have or an agenda that they have.

The Speaker: The member for Lawrence has up to two points for his reply.

Mr Cordiano: I listened with interest to various of the comments. I just wanted to say to my colleague from the Tory party that in fact I had a brief look at the proposals they have advanced and I would say that some of those initiatives—it's not as though those initiatives won't work in some fashion or to some degree, but the question is a \$2-billion cut. Wage freezes are being enacted under this legislation. Wage freezes are part of it. Allowing for attrition to do the job alone simply isn't going to work.

The whole point of my analysis is that if we're going to restructure and reorganize government, then you simply can't do it with an across-the-board kind of cut, because that has serious implications for service delivery and it has serious implications for the level of people who are working at various programs etc on down the line. We have to do this with strategic thinking in mind. What I was saying simply was that you have to order priorities. People and the number of jobs, the number of employees in certain programs, the number of employees with respect to various agencies, boards and commissions: Those are all questions that have to be taken into consideration. An across-the-board cut enforcing this on every transfer partner means that you're not taking priorities into consideration. That's precisely why this thing leads to chaos, and it will inevitably lead to job losses, because in certain areas you should have greater cuts than others and there's no consideration given to that kind of restructuring and reorganizing. That's the point.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I'm very pleased to rise at 11:05 pm to speak to Bill 48, An Act to encourage negotiated settlements in the public sector to preserve jobs and services while managing reductions in expenditures and to provide for certain matters related to the Government's expenditure reduction program. It's a nice fuzzy title. I don't know who dreamed it up.

This bill is the social contract. It's the fruition of a process that was initiated in April of this year and collapsed June 3 and forced the government to pursue the legislative option to achieve its target of \$2 billion of cuts in compensation reductions across the broader public sector.

On June 7 the Premier, in a statement in the House, said that enabling legislation would be introduced to provide for the implementation of the key provisions of the government's final social contract proposals. These proposals are as follows: a job security clause, under which every worker affected by the abolition of a position would have a priority for another job with the same public sector employer or with employers in the same industry or within the same region; a \$300-million three-year fund to top up laid-off workers' UI benefits to 95% of their take-home pay for one year or to be used to extend notice periods; labour participation on a capital partnership board; deferment of all wage and merit increases until April 1, 1996; worker involvement in eliminating waste, with half the savings to be applied to the reduction target for the sector where the saving was realized or waste eliminated and the other half to be retained by the employer; a system of unpaid leaves of absence administered to protect service delivery and to accommodate individual worker preferences; and an exemption for employees making less than \$30,000 a year.

The statement that the Minister of Finance put forward in this House on June 14 outlined the main provisions of the bill and it was tabled at that time.

The government has indicated that the purpose of the bill is to save \$2 billion a year for the next three years through reduced compensation costs to the Ontario public service and the broader public sector. The Minister of Finance has broken down targets for each sector in the broader public sector, and if you add them all up, it comes to \$2 billion. The Finance minister has acknowledged the legislation will interfere with collective bargaining processes, but his quote was, "Our government finds any prospect of overriding collective agreements painful and difficult, but our pain and difficulty are nothing compared to what the alternative would be for this province" if nothing was done.

The bill will cut transfer payments as of July 1, 1993, and sets August 1, 1993, six weeks from the date of the actual introduction of the bill, as the deadline for sectoral and local negotiations at which the parties are to negotiate cost savings equal to the reductions in the transfer payments for their respective sectors.

There is an incentive put forward to employers and employees to negotiate sectoral frameworks and local agreements. The bill provides that in the case where such agreements are negotiated, the employer will benefit from a lower expenditure reduction target—that's essentially the target in the government's final proposal—and the employees will gain access to the job security fund, which essentially is the topping up of the unemployment insurance benefit. The fund is \$300 million. It's a three-year fund which will be used to top off the laid-off employees' benefits, as I said, to a maximum of 95% of take-home pay or pay for

retraining and redeployment initiatives.

To take advantage of these incentives, it is not sufficient for employers and bargaining agents to agree on a sectoral framework on cost reductions. The sectoral frameworks must in turn be backed up by local agreement between employers and bargaining agents at the local level. These local agreements must be consistent with the sectoral framework, and in the case of non-unionized workplaces or employees, the employer and the employee must develop a plan consistent with the objectives of the broader social contract.

2310

All agreements and all plans must be consistent with a set of criteria to be established in the bill, which includes provisions to achieve targeted reductions, and there is an exemption, as I said, for employees who receive less than \$30,000 annually.

This bill also gives a great deal of discretionary power to the Minister of Finance. He may designate agreements until August 1, 1993, and there's a 10-day grace period, if it's required, under special circumstances. But it gives him discretionary power with respect to the designation of sectoral agreements or "frameworks," as they are called within the bill.

The bill does not set any objective measure of support for a framework within a sector that must be met in order for a plan to be designated as a sectoral framework. Instead, the bill provides that a plan can be designated if, in the opinion of the minister, there is sufficient support for the plan, based on negotiations leading to the development for the plan, to serve as the basis for local agreements.

The bill gives the minister access to a "special circumstances" clause which would allow the government to waive even the subjective sufficient-support test in any case where, in its opinion, it is desirable to designate a plan.

Under the bill, the Minister of Finance sets the targets, establishes the criteria for the designation of frameworks and agreements, and is allowed to decide whether those same criteria should be applied. This gives the government tremendous political latitude, and it will allow great flexibility in its effort to avoid the use of its fail-safe provisions.

That's a great deal of information about this bill, and there's still more. This bill is extremely complex, complicated legislation, as we know. I would submit to you that since this bill has been introduced not even a week ago, very few people in Ontario fully understand its implications. The member for Oakville South did a good job of explaining this bill to the House.

Mr Carr: Up all night reading it last night.

Mr Arnott: Up all night reading it last night and we're up all night here debating it. But it's a very difficult bill for people to understand at this point in time.

In the course of this debate we've heard the suggestion that this bill denies workers' rights. It denies collective bargaining rights that have been hard won over the years. We've heard that this bill strips contracts that have been signed, sealed and have been in effect for some time. We've heard that this gives almost dictatorial power to the Minister of Finance, the Treasurer. We've heard all of those things.

But we also know that this bill is motivated by the fiscal situation that the province faces, that the government faces right now. They're taking steps, in their opinion, to control the expenditures of the government, and this is an important piece of legislation. I would argue that it is in fact important enough to be regarded by the Premier, by the cabinet, as a confidence motion, because it is of that degree of importance and magnitude.

We've heard the Liberal Party in the course of this debate put forward its particular view. They are clearly opposed to this bill. They are saying that for many different reasons and in many different ways they are clearly opposed to this bill. But I want to go into some historical context.

The Liberal Party in Ontario was out of power for 42 years, from 1943 to 1985, and at that time, in 1985, the Liberal Party ascended to power with the help of the New Democrats. An accord was signed and a list of legislation was devised and developed, negotiated between the two parties, and they came to an agreement whereby, in return for the NDP's support in the House for two years, certain legislation would be passed that the NDP really dictated to the Liberals. I know some of the Liberals perhaps philosophically supported some of the initiatives they brought forward, but they were to some degree held to ransom by the New Democrats, who, yes, had an agenda that they wanted to put forward. Then, of course, in 1987 the Liberals won a landslide majority government and the New Democrats were the third party, with 19 seats.

As it turned out, over those five years that the Liberals were in power, from 1985 to 1990, on average—now, they'll correct me if I'm mistaken when they get their opportunity, but I believe that on average their spending increased approximately 10% every single year, and over those years they also hired an additional, at least, 10,000 civil servants.

The Liberals have argued that those were the boom times and people demanded services and they were responding to the demands that they heard in the community, but the reality and the absolute facts are there. That spending was undertaken. Now, they say they paid as they went and so on, but the reality is they set up a structure of government and a size of government that was unsustainable unless the economy was booming the way it was in the late 1980s, and they know that.

They know that they set up a structure of government

that was totally unsustainable. They are the party of big government, and it's not surprising that when any restraint initiative is put forward by the provincial government now, they oppose it in its specific terms. They continue to claim that they support restraint in principle, but they have not supported it in practice on any significant initiative that has been brought forward by the New Democrats.

Now I'd like to talk about the historical context with respect to the NDP government. Of course, the New Democrats, and the CCF before them, have always seen themselves as a party of the left, a party of social democracy. From our perspective, they wanted to bring in arrangements that would change the power relationships within our society, and we've seen that since they've come to power. They've always stood for an expansion of social programs, and no matter how you cut it, those programs have been very, very expensive. The New Democrats would argue that those programs were necessary, that they were good at the time, that they continue to be good, but the reality is they have always stood for an expansion of government.

When they were actually holding the balance of power when the Conservatives were in power, from the years 1975 to 1981, they were in a position where they put forward an agenda. It wasn't in a formalized accord agreement, but the reality is, at that time the Conservative government did in fact bring in rent controls. The biggest mistake at that time was there was not a sunset clause attached to them, because at the time you could make an argument they may have been required, but certainly now they are not required. But at that time they were very, very influential in terms of the policies that have been brought forward by the various governments that they have worked with while in opposition.

But when they came to power in 1990, the statement was made—and it will ring from the rafters of this place as long as this building is here—they said they were going to spend their way out of the recession. They brought in staggering increases in spending, and in fact the total compensation package to the public sector went up 16% that very first year. Spending declined on some specific ministries—

Mr Callahan: That was their Achilles' heel. That started the ball rolling.

Mr Arnott: No, that total amount expended on the broader public sector salaries, wages, benefits, went up 16%. The spending declined in some ministries, but in other ministries it soared, and we know what ministries. The government has their right, they have their own priorities, but certainly when they talk about cutbacks in certain ministries, many of the ministries' budgets have exploded. I'm thinking of Housing, for example.

Then later we saw them change gears. Gradually they started to continue to cut spending on a greater and greater level. Then on April 23 of this year we heard about the expenditure control plan, which was a signifi-

cant series of expenditure reductions. It was difficult for the government, because I know that in the past, for so many years, they found it very, very difficult to finally come to grips with the fact that government had to shrink somewhat. But they brought this in. It took a good deal of courage to do it, but they did it anyway.

2320

Then on the budget of this year—the date was May 19—we heard the Treasurer start off by talking about the difficult situation, economically, that the province faced. On page 3 of his actual budget address, and I'm quoting from him, I remember him very clearly standing there in his place, and this struck me very much when I was—

Mr Carr: How could you tell he was standing?

Mr Arnott: I could tell he was standing because he was standing.

This struck me when he said: "Excluding sovereign countries, Ontario has become the largest borrower in the world. On average we borrow more than \$1 billion a month. We spend more on interest costs than we spend on our schools. About two thirds of our new borrowing comes from outside Canada—which means that most of the interest we pay on this borrowing goes to foreign bankers, investors and economies.

"Simply to let the debt increase each year at an accelerating pace would be irresponsible. Consumers would know that more and more of their incomes would be taxed away to pay the cost of public debt interest—not just this year, but long into the future. Businesses looking for a good place to invest would be discouraged from locating here. All of us who rely on our health care system and other public services would know that, sooner or later, there would simply not be enough money to maintain those services. More and more of our tax dollars would go to pay government bondholders in New York, Zurich, Tokyo and elsewhere instead of being invested here in Ontario—in Ontario services and Ontario jobs."

He continues on, but to me that was the most striking part of the entire budget because it demonstrated that the Treasurer had finally seen the light. I submit to you that if this statement had been included in the 1991 budget, in the first budget, and if that first budget had reflected the reality—we in the Conservative Party knew we were entering into this situation and we told you at the time—we would not even be talking about a social contract today. It wouldn't even be an issue.

My own position on fiscal matters I believe has been very clear from day one, and I've not deviated from the course that I talked of in my very first speech in this Legislature, my maiden speech. I said:

"We in Wellington understand the economic value of hard work and the social value of personal responsibility. From this understanding stems a serious concern when our government refuses to live within its means,

when our government grows until it begins to inhibit overall economic growth and when even excessive taxation does not prevent the expansion of our government debt."

I continued along this approach and those in our caucus have put that forward. We've continued to try and get the government to see the simple common sense of a government living within its means and the benefit over the short term and the long term of that approach to governing.

Early this year, I was most concerned about the statement the Premier made when he was asked what his New Year goals were. I believe the words he said were that his greatest goal for the New Year was the defeat of the federal government. I was so incensed, I fired off one of the nastiest letters I've ever written to any public official, because I was just so angry. I said to the Premier that he's got to start showing some leadership, that he's no longer the Leader of the Opposition and that it's important he start taking his responsibilities very seriously.

I'm glad I wrote this letter because I know others were putting that view forward to him as well, and I think in some small way he came to his senses at some point early this year. He realized he did have to start showing leadership and that it wasn't good enough to blame all his problems on everybody else. He has one opportunity here to be Premier of this province, and he wasn't going to destroy the province over the course of his watch.

I had the opportunity to inform my constituents of some of the views that I held and some of the things that I thought were going to come forward into the House in this spring session. I talked about the provincial debt and I said that it's very important, that if the government had taken a more conservative approach to its finances three years ago, we could have been approaching a balanced budget instead of going through this process that we are.

I see the Minister of Transportation chuckling, but there are many other provinces in this country, including New Brunswick, that have taken the small-c conservative and frugal fiscal approach to their finances for the last four or five years, and actually in New Brunswick they expect to have a balanced operating budget next year.

At that time, we were hearing that there was a possibility of a \$17-billion deficit, and the Premier was starting to talk about massive cuts to the provincial civil service and the broader public sector, including salary cuts and major layoffs. It was a shock to a lot of people that this Premier, the New Democratic Party Premier, Bob Rae, would be talking in those terms. At that time, I called upon the government to show leadership, and I said it was important that any reductions that had to be done, be done fairly, and that it was important that we show leadership on this issue. If belts had to be

tightened, we had to start tightening our belts here first.

I'm not happy about this bill. There's no member in this House who is happy about the fact that this bill has to come forward. No one is happy with discussions of layoffs, rollbacks, cutbacks, contract stripping. I don't know any member who takes any pleasure in this debate or this bill or this discussion, but the principle of this bill is important, the principle and the symbolism of this bill. It's an important bill which demonstrates the government's intent to attempt to get its finances under control. I believe this.

I believe it's very difficult for the New Democrats to do this. They have always stood for certain rights of workers and so on and they're taking steps now that must be very, very difficult for them, but I think it demonstrates to me that if the New Democratic Party government is taking these steps, we are in a serious fiscal crisis or we're approaching it very closely. I think it's very important that we communicate to the people of Ontario in a frank way and in an honest way that we have to live within our means. It's important to our long-term survival economically.

I have close friends and family who may be affected by this legislation. We all know our own salaries in this House may be affected. When I talk to friends and family whose salaries may be affected, whose jobs may be affected by this legislation, I tell them: "It's not the value of the work you do that we're talking about. The value of the work you do is very important to us and it's reflected in your salary. It's not that; it's the ability of our society and our economy to collectively pay everyone who works in the public sector."

That's really the issue. We've set up a structure, and you can point fingers at who may have done it, but really the reality is that in the late 1980s, a structure of government was set up that we could not sustain and now cannot afford.

I have to look at this bill in the context of the people of Wellington. That's my most important responsibility. I look at this bill and the people of Wellington and I know some may support it and some would want me to vote against it. It's a difficult decision for me to make, because I've listened closely to the debate and I recognize the points that have been made. I recognize that many of the points on both sides of the issue are very legitimate, but I have to look at this bill in terms of the short-term and the medium-term and the long-term impact on the people in Wellington.

I know from the Treasurer's own projections that if the course of spending that had been entered into up until the point of maybe the end of 1992, the calendar year of 1992—the Treasurer indicated that if no reversal of that direction was taken, the net debt of Ontario would quickly explode to \$120 billion by 1996, and the public debt interest we pay today, which is about 13 cents of every dollar the government takes in, might explode to double overnight. If the public debt interest

percentage went from 13 cents to 25 cents, you would see a significant cut in government programs.

We have to keep that in mind. We have to think in those terms, 1996-97. We all know what compound interest can do. If you've got money in your pocket, if you've got money in your bank account, your money will grow very quickly, but if it's money you owe and compound interest is working against you, it can explode and literally strangle you.

Our party has put forward, we feel, a very constructive approach to this bill since April, since the government started to indicate that it had to take this course. We've tried to provide them with constructive alternatives, and I believe we've been as helpful as we possibly can be. I know when you see the exchange in the House between our leader, the member for Nipissing, and the Premier, you can see the mutual respect that is there in terms of the cooperation that we're trying to put forward.

This is a marked, significant difference from the approach the Liberal Party has taken, which is the old politics: Just try to hammer the government and hope to pick up whatever political gain might be there after you knock it down. We think it's more important than that. The future of the province is more important. We've got to work with the government. We've got to extend our hand to help them if we can.

2330

Our leader, the member for Nipissing, has put forward a number of specific suggestions that we would like to see reflected in this legislation in terms of amendments. I think it's very important that the government give careful consideration to these six conditions:

(1) A three-year hiring freeze which would have the potential to reduce the annual cost of the public sector compensation by over \$2 billion in the third year;

(2) A public sector wage freeze that would commence on the anniversary date of all contracts and continue for a three-year period from that date, so that you wouldn't be, in the middle of a contract, changing the terms that were agreed upon earlier;

(3) Whistle-blower provisions to protect public servants—this is something the government's talked about for, I think, their whole mandate and nothing really has come forward—who report fraud, waste or other abuses from workplace retribution, while netting substantial additional savings.

That's a very, very important one. I think that would save a lot of money if it was in fact brought in.

(4) Provisions to discourage government departments from spending their entire budgets within the fiscal year; eliminating year-end burnoff or face rollbacks.

That's very important, too, because I think the culture of the public service over the years has been it's important to spend all the money you've been allocated or you're going to lose it. I think we've got to change

that culture. We've got to change it so there's more of an accountability ethic, so that public servants realize it's the taxpayer's money they're spending, it's their neighbour's money they're spending and it's their own money they're spending.

(5) Performance bonuses for public servants, based on the efficiencies and productivity gained, similar to private sector agreements we see so often in industrial plants, where if someone comes up with a good idea that will save money in the workplace or promote efficiency, they'll be rewarded. And so you'll have a lot of good ideas coming forward.

(6) Establishment of an expenditure review committee to identify non-productive government programs and to prioritize existing programs.

That is sort of the flip side to the Fair Tax Commission. This is something I have been calling for for a long time. It's very important that the government spend some of its time, a lot of its resources, in looking at the way it's spending money, instead of just spending all its time and resources in trying to dream up new ways to take money out of people's pockets, whether it be casino gambling or whatever. That's very, very important.

I think this bill is going to continue to be debated over the next half an hour and probably into next week as well, so I know that many members will have an opportunity over the weekend to hear from their constituents what they think of this bill. I would challenge all members of this House to give consideration to what I've said tonight, and I thank you very much.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet and Government House Leader): The member for Wellington's comments tonight have been, I think, thoughtful and helpful in some respects in terms of creating some thinking on all sides.

But there were a couple of problems with his comments that I'd like to focus back for him. He started out his comments with some assumptions about how the two and a half years of this government started out and he made some specific comments about how we started out by, for example—and I think he used the figure—raising the compensation costs by some 13%. If the member is going to base some of his conclusions on assumptions like that, then he needs to fully understand those assumptions.

In the late 1970s, for example, the Davis administration started a process of privatizing a number of services like the food services in Correctional Services. For a very few short years we actually had savings as a result of those privatizations because there were minimum wages being paid and so on. As contracts now come due, we discover, for example, though, that we're now paying about 160% of what we could provide those services for ourselves. So when contracts run out, we're taking dollars that are being spent anyway to provide

services that have to be there and, in fact, making them permanent jobs in the civil service, but providing the service more cheaply.

There were also thousands of unclassified contracts that both the former Conservative administration and the Liberal administration continued to use, thousands of people who'd been working 15, 16 and 17 years in unclassified contracts, which this government has said to the ministries that they shall, when they've demonstrated that kind of need for the work, make classified positions and bring those dollars into the salary and wage line in their budgets so they aren't hidden, so they're up front where the public can see them. There was not a 13% increase in compensation costs if you look at the reality of the work that was being done up front and hidden.

Mr Bisson: I just want to comment shortly on some of the points the member's made. First of all, I appreciate the constructive nature that he took in debate. I think the member tried to come to this assembly and to put forward some points about how he feels and how his caucus feels some of this should be done.

I want to point out that some of the things he talked about, the six points the Conservative caucus brought forward, are a little bit of what could be found within the social contract if the unions wanted to come to the table and talk about these things.

But I want to talk about one of them because it's a little bit difficult to deal with it, and that's the second point he raised on freezing contracts, basically freezing salaries for three years after contracts come due. I think most members in this assembly would recognize there is a real, inherent problem with that particular proposal. Let me try to explain it this way: If we try to do that, we know already there are some collective agreements that were negotiated last year that were two-year deals, and in some cases three, that basically came out to a freeze already for a couple of years. What you would end up doing is not only asking people to take a three-year wage freeze; you would end up at actually four and, in some cases, five years as a freeze if you tried to do it at the end of the extension, as the end of the contracts come due.

It is, I think, probably an option that most of us on this side of the House were very prepared to take a look at, but we also recognize there are real, inherent difficulties with that. The flip side of it is, what happens in the event that there is a bargaining unit that doesn't have a collective agreement and has to take a three-year wage freeze now, and then you have another bargaining unit somewhere down the road that's getting 1%, 2% or 3% as a wage increase for the next year or two? It would be unfair. Some workers would be getting a raise while other workers would be taking a freeze. I think what you have to do, just on a fairness aspect of this thing, is turn around and have a date, and it is an arbitrary date, and say, "Everything is frozen from this

point on," and collective agreements come back open after that; they just run their course afterwards.

So I appreciate the debate, but I think you recognize there are some difficulties in what you proposed.

Mr Callahan: I don't think there's any question that all members of the Legislature realize that there has to be some attempt made to try to get us out of the fiscal problem we're in. But I guess my major concern is, I look at the act and the preamble to it says, "In order to achieve significant savings in public sector expenditures in a fair and equitable manner," and yet when I look at the provisions of the act it doesn't provide for a tribunal. In fact, it eliminates, from the entire procedure, protection provided under the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, which in effect means that if the minister by his or her own direction, in this case the Minister of Finance, decides to do something, there is no appeal; that's it.

If that is in fact meeting the preamble, which is to achieve significant savings in public sector expenditures in a fair and equitable way, then I really find it difficult to accept, because when you give absolute power to a single person, that absolute power means that people do not have an equitable and fair way of dealing with things. That is the total antithesis of collective bargaining. I don't know whether the members in the government understand that. I would urge you to read the bill, because in fact the bill flies right in the face of the whole principle of collective bargaining. There is no collective bargaining. It's a one-sided agreement. It's like the employer telling the employee, "This is what the deal will be," or vice versa.

I always thought that New Democrats believed in collective bargaining. Well, this bill is not collective bargaining. This bill, in fact, is so one-sided, is so dictatorial, that it's absolutely frightening that it would be brought in by any party outside of the Soviet Union, quite frankly.

2340

Mr Carr: I was struck by something the member said in his maiden speech, and I want to read it again—I'm close enough that I was able to grab a copy—and say exactly what he said, and I wish the members during that period back in December 3, 1990, had listened. He said: "We in Wellington understand the economic value of hard work and the social value of personal responsibility. From this understanding stems a serious concern when our government refuses to live within its means"—remember, he said this in 1990—"when our government grows until it begins to inhibit overall economic growth." Remember, this is a new member who came in, in September 1990, and in December that year he was telling you then that we can't continue on with the tax, spend and borrow approach. He goes on to say, "when even excessive taxation does not prevent the expansion of our government."

From the time this young member came in, from the beginning, in his first speech, he told you people across the floor, "Don't continue to tax, spend and borrow like there's no tomorrow." A young individual who came in as a rookie MPP knew more about what needed to be done than the Treasurer and the Premier of this province. You didn't listen to him then, and now, as a direct result of that, you're paying the price. He told you in his first speech what you should be doing, but, oh no, you had all the answers. You were going to spend your way out of it. This young member came in and told you what needed to be done. If you had listened to us then, you wouldn't be in the problems you're in today. You continually disregarded what the opposition was saying. You made the bed you're lying in today. If you'd listened to us, you wouldn't be facing the problem you have today. All I can say is that in the next election, I hope we get a lot more young, bright members like the member for Wellington.

The Speaker: The member for Wellington has up to two minutes for his reply.

Mr Arnott: Thank you to the member for Oakville South for his kind remarks, and I want to thank the members who responded to my speech at this late hour. To the government House leader, I appreciate his indulgence. He was listening to most of my speech, and I appreciate that. The member for Cochrane South, though, I don't think was listening to my speech. The member for Brampton North I don't think was listening to my speech either, but that's okay.

Mr Perruzza: The economy's failing. It doesn't make sense.

The Speaker: The member for Downsview, please come to order.

Mr Arnott: When I talk to people in our riding of Wellington, the people who aren't in favour of the social contract, the ones who are opposed to it, I ask them, "Why are you opposed to it?" Their concern is that if they have to send in 5% of their income to this government, they don't have confidence that this money is going to be frugally managed. We have seen over the last three years now a number of specific programs and instances where the government, in spite of the fact that it claims to be trying to enter into a period of restraint, is entering into expenditures on highly questionable programs.

I think of junior kindergarten. I remember the Minister of Community and Social Services over there, when he was Minister of Education, persisted in insisting that every school board had to have junior kindergarten. Some school boards don't want it and the people don't want it. They don't want to pay for it and it's not necessary.

I think of the non-profit housing program, well over \$1 billion a year, a very questionable program. If you looked at alternatives to let the free market do the job,

you wouldn't be needing to spend \$1 billion.

I look at the welfare bill that has gone through the roof. Even though unemployment has stabilized, the cost of welfare continues to go through the roof.

I look at the hundreds of millions of dollars that have been spent on putting the private sector day care operators out of business.

This is one of the reasons that people are concerned. They're not prepared to send in their 5% cheque to this government if they don't have some confidence that the money is going to be used frugally.

The Speaker: Is there further debate? I recognize the honourable member for Essex-Kent.

Applause.

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): Thank you. I certainly appreciate the support from my colleagues. That's what being here in politics is all about. It's about people working together to help the people who are most in need. That's what this government is all about.

There's been a lot of comment from the other side, from the Conservatives and from the Liberals, talking about the members in this New Democratic Party with a labour background and how they're so surprised at some of the things we are doing and why we're doing them. Mr Speaker, I just want to say to you and to the members of this House that, yes, I am a member of the CAW and very proud of it. I'm very proud to be a member of the labour movement.

Interjection: He was a member.

Mr Hayes: I still am a member, thank you. I have come from a labour background. My father was a very strong member of the labour movement and he was also a CCFer and a New Democrat.

Interjection: How strong was he?

Mr Hayes: Very, very strong. If it weren't for the labour movement, I would not have been involved in politics, because the labour movement taught me about things like social justice, helping people in need, helping people to get decent housing, helping people to get decent pay, helping people to get decent working conditions, health and safety, cleaning up the environment. What they taught me was that when you work in the labour movement, you not only work for that specific group within your workplace; you go out into your community and you get involved in other issues to help other people that don't have the support that is needed.

Mr Turnbull: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Quite apparently, the member from Essex-Kent hasn't read this bill. I'll undertake to read it to him.

The Speaker: The member does not have a point of order.

Mr Hayes: I just thought I'd follow the lead of the member over there who never does speak to the subject at hand.

Anyhow, as I said before, one of the things they have taught me is to think about other people and try to help other people, and that's why I got into politics in the first place. When I was in the labour movement, prior to getting elected, I fought, along with my brothers and sisters, such things as the GST, high interest rates, free trade, the inflated dollar, all those things. These are some of the things that have brought us to where we are today.

I know the members from the other side of the House don't like to hear that, but those are really the facts, because what has certainly affected this economy and has hurt Ontario more than any other province is because of the industrial sector Ontario has, and that's the sector that was hurt the most by the free trade.

Of course we also have the Liberal Party, which doesn't know the difference between a debt and a surplus. I think we can recall that. One of the members was out here this afternoon speaking to people, telling them that the Liberals left this government with a surplus.

Interjection: What did he get? He got booed.

Mr Hayes: I think he got booed by talking that way.

I had three pre-budget meetings in my riding. The message I received from the people in my riding, and they were public meetings well advertised, was that we have to cut spending, cut the debt in this province, but also maintain—

Mr Phillips: How about jobs?

Mr Hayes: Yes, maintain jobs and essential services. That is exactly what this government has done, because this government is committed to the key social and economic programs: capital and infrastructure, housing, Jobs Ontario initiatives and adequate levels of social assistance.

One of the things we have done with the social contract is that this government has tried very hard to achieve a broadly based negotiated agreement consistent with the principles of a social contract. It is unfortunate that we were not able to come to a successful agreement, but we are confident that the sectoral and local negotiations will generate successful agreements. The incentives are clear: reduced savings targets for employers and employees, better security for workers and access to the job security fund.

2350

Really, what Bill 48, actually the purpose of the bill—I think all the members have probably read it, but just for the record:

"The purposes of this act are as follows:

"1. To encourage employers, bargaining agents and employees to achieve savings through agreements at the sectoral and local levels primarily through adjustments in compensation arrangements.

"2. To maximize the preservation of public sector

jobs and services through improvements in productivity, including the elimination of waste and inefficiency.

"3. To provide for expenditure reduction for a three-year period and to provide criteria and mechanisms for achieving the reductions.

"4. To provide for a job security fund."

To get back to one of the things I was talking about earlier, the CAW—I know there are other unions—for example, in private industry, I think Kimberly-Clark and Abitibi and Algoma Steel are some of the areas where the labour movement actually got together with the corporations and they did take reductions in some of their wages. They did that to save jobs.

With the CAW and the UAW prior to that—we do have plants in this province right now—had it not been for the workers and the leaders in the labour movement and the corporations getting together and actually looking at concessions and changing work standards and classifications and things of that nature, there are corporations in this province that would not be here.

There's a great reason for that. It's because the CAW and other labour movements across this country—not just the CAW; I mention that because that's where I was—think of the economy. They're very concerned about the economy. They have fought very hard to boost this economy. They have taken steps where they have actually been able to improve efficiency and improve productivity and things of that nature just to keep the corporations going. The main reason for that is to protect jobs.

I'm just thinking about where the New Democrats really differ from the Liberals and the Conservatives, which is that the programs we have put into place since we've come into office have been long-term plans, not the kind of ad hoc programs that the Liberals have always had. Ad hoc programs were the Liberal way of life. In other words, if there's a problem, let's just throw some money at it and maybe good luck next year.

We don't operate that way. The other thing is we're being criticized from the Conservatives on some of the things that we're doing. I'd just like to tell the workers in this province—I think they're already aware of it—if the Tories were in power today, they would not even be thinking about negotiating; they would just drop the hammer on the workers. They wouldn't even talk to the workers or the employers. That's where we'd be.

Just a message for the people out in the public is that this government has introduced a lot of good legislation for workers in this province and for the people who are most in need: the minorities; the women; people who are on social assistance, programs to get them off of those—

Hon Mr Pouliot: The less fortunate.

Mr Hayes: The less fortunate, that's correct. Just to remind members of the House and the public: programs like pay equity, which others didn't have the nerve to

do; employment equity, another area for minorities and women; and the disabled; the Ontario Labour Relations Act, Bill 40—that's the one where we were going to scare all of the businesses out of this province.

It's the rhetoric from the Liberals and from the Conservatives that has done more harm to this economy, with their scare tactics and their doom and gloom. I would suggest to them that they should start talking a little bit more positively about Ontario, what a great place to live and what a great workforce we have.

I'm just going to mention a few of these: the employee ownership legislation; increase in the minimum wage, which they were certainly afraid to do; the environmental bill of rights; the Advocacy Act, all of these kinds of things. But also the one thing that I would—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Essex-Kent has the floor.

Mr Hayes: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): We are just trying to help you get through.

Mr Hayes: Oh, I can do with that.

These are only a few of the great things that this government has done, and the thing is that I want the public to know and I want the workers in this province to know, not only in the public sector but also in the private sector, that some of these programs that I spoke about here this evening, the members over there, the Liberals and the Tories—and I want the people to know this—have publicly said that they would throw some of these programs right out. Those programs are there to protect workers and to help people who are most in need, and those people over there are going to throw them out.

I can't understand that. They get up in the House and say this is a terrible thing that we're doing, and yet the good legislation that we're implementing, what are they going to do with it? They're going to throw it out. They think they're going to throw it out.

But one of the things I know I have learned, and I've learned it from the labour movement, is that there are some things that you know you don't like to do, you might not want to do, but you know you have to take a stand because there are things that we have to do. We know that we have to do this because if we don't do something, we do know that our largest program in this province would be paying the interest on the debt in this province. I think we have to start all working together to start looking at the future and trying to save the future for our children and for our grandchildren. I don't think we should be thinking just about today.

We know that we had been left in somewhat of a mess when we got here in 1990, but I think that we are working at it and we are doing very well. I can tell you one thing: Wherever I go in my riding, I still have

friends of mine—not necessarily New Democrats; Liberals and Conservatives—who come to me and say: “We know that it’s not your fault, and you guys are doing all right. It’s the Tory economics, the Mr Wilson and Mulroney economics, that have certainly got you into this mess, and that Liberal government certainly didn’t help you out very much.” I’m being told, “I wish that somebody would tell those Liberals what the difference is between a surplus and a debt,” and we’re still looking for that. Now, they may explain that some day.

Am I wrapped up? That’s it. Thank you very much. Like I said, we know what we have to do. I think that we have the fortitude to do it, and we’re doing it, certainly, with the people who are most in need, to try to keep our social programs, our health care system and our education system going and hope that we can build them stronger in the future.

The Speaker: A good place to break your remarks.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Pursuant to standing order 55, I’d like to announce that on the afternoon of Monday, June 21, we will continue with the adjourned second reading consideration of Bill 48, the Social Contract Act.

The House business for Monday evening and for the remainder of the week is still under discussion with the opposition parties.

On the morning of Thursday, June 24, during the time reserved for private members’ public business, we will consider ballot item number 17, second reading of Bill 45, standing in the name of Mr Murphy, and ballot item number 18, second reading of Bill 46, standing in the name of Mr Jordan.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): It being 12 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock Monday next.

The House adjourned at 2400.

CONTENTS

Thursday 17 June 1993

SECOND READINGS

Social Contract Act, 1993, Bill 48

Mr Cousens	1591, 1617, 1627, 1633
Ms Swarbrick	1604, 1607
Mr Carr	1606, 1611, 1618, 1623, 1626, 1632, 1649
Mrs Sullivan	1607, 1621, 1624, 1627, 1638
Mr Hope	1607, 1643
Mr Offer	1608, 1643
Mr Perruzza	1617, 1618, 1634, 1637, 1642
Mr Callahan	1617, 1620, 1632, 1637, 1649
Mr Tilson	1618, 1628, 1633, 1636, 1642
Mr Ward	1618, 1621
Mr Turnbull	1620, 1633
Mr Mackenzie	1621
Mr Stockwell	1621, 1626, 1632
Mrs Grier	1626
Mr Phillips	1636
Mr Bisson	1637, 1648
Mr Cordiano	1638, 1643
Mr Sorbara	1642
Mr Arnott	1643, 1649
Mr Charlton	1648
Mr Hayes	1650

OTHER BUSINESS

Business of the House

Mr Charlton	1652
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6 1994

